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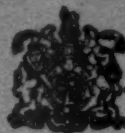
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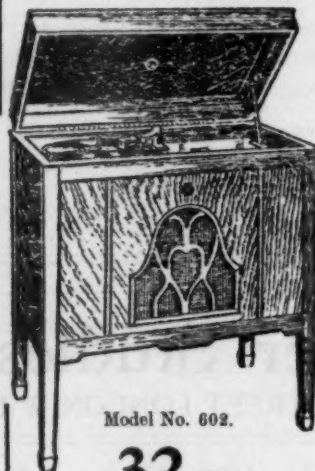
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Music and Letters

JANUARY, 1932.

VOLUME XIII

No. 1

OPERA IN ENGLISH

THE history of opera in English from the early years of the nineteenth century brings to light certain points which it would be profitable to discuss in considering the future prospects of this most important branch of the musical art. By opera in English, or English opera, is meant the performance of any opera in the vernacular by native singers, including, of course, works by native composers.

That the vogue of Italian opera in the previous century was seriously interfered with by the success of the 'Beggar's Opera' seems to be unquestionable, and this success started the fashion of that peculiarly English 'ballad' opera which persisted in one form or another for many years. The 'Beggar's Opera' itself was one of the first examples of this artless style in which the dialogue was interspersed with lyrics set to traditional melodies or familiar airs by composers of the day, while eventually the practice grew of a composer supplying the music himself. Some of these early operas have been revived from time to time, such as 'Love in a Village' and 'Lionel and Clarissa,' but their chief importance is of a historical nature, since they established a model as to what English opera stood for and, incidentally, what it was the real business of the English opera-singer and the English opera-composer to concern themselves with.

At the time when Dr. S. J. Arnold (opera and oratorio composer, organist, and editor of a uniform edition of Handel's works) opened the Lyceum Theatre, under the title of English Opera House, ballad operas were being frequently given at Drury Lane and Covent Garden; they alternated with the regular dramatic performances of the day. Although the Lyceum had been built in 1798, it was not until 1809 that Arnold's son was able to obtain a licence for English operatic performances, and then only for the summer months of the year. Those were the days of the monopoly held by the 'patent' theatres, Drury Lane and Covent Garden; and this restriction upon per-

formances at other theatres was not removed until the Act of 1843. The opera, however, which could be freely given was the Italian opera established at the King's Theatre (later, Her Majesty's).

Under such conditions it is obvious that English operatic enterprise could only be intermittent in character, and that any constructive plan was impossible. But at any rate by the 'thirties some idea of permanency was in the air, as is proved by Bunn's application to Sir Robert Peel for a subsidy for Drury Lane and Covent Garden, an application which, one need hardly say, was refused. The English Government down to the present day, if we except the recent B.B.C. subsidy (of which more later), has always set its face resolutely against any grant towards musical or dramatic performance.

In the early years of the century the Italian opera was the means whereby such famous works as 'Cosi fan tutte' (1811), 'Don Giovanni' (1817) and 'Il Barbiere di Siviglia' (1818) were made known to English audiences; and it should be noted that several of the successful productions were given in English (generally garbled) versions at Covent Garden. But there was a very strong prejudice against the employment of recitative in English opera, although, it may be remarked, no one minded it in oratorio. The ballad opera, in fact, had established a tradition which it took many years to break through. One fancies that the practically-minded Englishman wanted to be quite sure what it was all about, and that he did not bother himself about artistic principles. But this practice was a very severe handicap both to English singers and composers in their endeavours to compete against the Italian dramatic style. Since Arne's 'Artaxerxes,' written in the Italian manner (1762), no English opera appeared with recitative until Barnett's 'Mountain Sylph' in 1834.

It must not be supposed that opera in English was always a financial failure and opera in Italian always a success. What is important to realise is that throughout the century there were always people ready to provide capital and to exert immense energy to promote the interests of either.

On the English side there must be mentioned Alfred Bunn, who for a quarter of a century was director and for part of the time lessee of Drury Lane. His energy was unquestionable; from 1833 to 1847 he was responsible for the production of many foreign and English operas of which last he himself was the librettist, an adapter rather than author, since the texts were of French origin. 'The Bohemian Girl' was the principal success; and only less of a success was Wallace's 'Maritana.' Other operas of Balfe and of Benedict and Barnett were produced by him, in spite of his bankruptcy in 1840. It is interesting, by the way, to note that Bunn was the first manager

to introduce stalls, and to relegate the pit to the back of the auditorium.

In 1835 the famous tenor, John Braham, showed his faith in English opera by spending £26,000 in building the St. James's Theatre for the performance of native works, but he became bankrupt a few years later. A subsequent venture to found English opera at this same theatre by John Barnett, the composer, only lasted for a single week. In 1841 Balfe, at that time the most popular native opera composer of the day, made yet another, but unsuccessful, attempt to found a 'truly national opera' at the Lyceum. Then there were short seasons at the Princess's (Oxford Street, now demolished), Surrey and Grecian (City Road) Theatres; while Bunn tried again in 1848, a season at Covent Garden, which lasted for two months only.

The autumn and winter of 1847-8 saw the opening and end of a bold venture at Drury Lane; worth recording, since it was promoted by the most widely popular musical figure of the day, L. A. Jullien.⁽¹⁾ He had made his name by a hugely successful series of Promenade Concerts, at which his obviously magnetic personality and his liking for things on a sumptuous scale—a large orchestra and the best soloists obtainable—had been given full play. He leased the theatre and engaged Berlioz to conduct; and appointed, amongst other officials, Sir Henry Bishop as 'Inspector-superintendent at rehearsals.' Well, well! Sims Reeves made his first appearance there as an opera-singer in 'Lucia.' Sumptuous concerts are one thing; sumptuous opera is quite another. So it is not surprising that bankruptcy ensued. Mention may also be made of the opera performances organised by another popular figure, Mme. Vestris, manager, contralto-singer and engaging personality. During her tenancy of Covent Garden in conjunction with Charles Matthews, eventually her husband, various productions took place, such as Arne's 'Artaxerxes,' 'Norma,' 'Figaro' and others.

On the Italian side Covent Garden was reconstructed internally and reopened as a permanent home for Italian opera in 1847. It did not take long for the manager, Delafield, to lose £60,000, owing, it is said, to his extravagance. In 1850 Gye took over the management and from that moment there began the historic rivalry between that theatre and Her Majesty's under Lumley (bankrupt 1852), and E. T. Smith and later Mapleson, which lasted on and off till 1881.

It would seem that the position at the middle of the century was one in which foreign opera performance was asserting its supremacy

(1) See *Grove's Dict.*, Vol. II, p. 797.

more and more, and in fact re-establishing its domination, which has persisted almost without interruption down to the present day.

Yet the belief in English opera did not waver. It is unnecessary to say anything of further smaller efforts at the Surrey Theatre, the New English Opera House (Royalty Theatre), St. James's, Sadler's Wells and the like. The next important venture was the establishment of the Pyne and Harrison Company at the Lyceum in 1857, which, like the Moody-Manners Company of more recent times, was managed by two of the principal singers. This company gave autumn-winter seasons at Covent Garden for some years and produced a number of novelties, one of which, 'The Lily of Killarney,' still survives. It was dissolved in 1864 after, it is said, having made £50,000. Harrison died in 1868. Another attempt was the Royal English Opera Association which had a short life at Covent Garden in 1864 after producing Auber's 'Masaniello,' some operas of Macfarren, and one or two other works. After that there was a comparative blank until Carl Rosa founded his company in 1875.

Up to this point it will not be denied that English opera had had a good chance of proving its ability to hold its own and that our composers had been given many opportunities to show their powers. In seeking for excuse for the failure to do better one must consider some adverse factors.

Of primary importance was the matter of opera form. So long as composers and singers had been tied down to the ballad style so long was it impossible for them to develop worthily either in writing or in performance. It had been assumed too easily that the comparative simplicity of the dialogue opera was best suited to native talent; but the constant stringing together of a number of singable melodies ignored altogether the musico-dramatic problems which were already being attacked in various ways by the foreign composers; and when these later works found their way into the current English repertory our singers had to adapt their style as best they could, naturally taking as their model that of the foreign performance. And as regards the composer, Weber's opinion expressed in a letter to Planché, the author of 'Oberon,' may be quoted. 'I must repeat that the cut of the whole is very foreign to all my ideas and maxims. The intermixing of so many principal actors who do not sing, the omission of the music in the most important moments—all deprive our "Oberon" of the title of an opera, and will make him unfit for all other theatres in Europe.' This was in 1825.

Twenty-seven years later the *Athenæum* said, in reference to the Sims Reeves benefit at Drury Lane:

Where is the repertory? Betwixt our old English ballad opera,

which is insufficient for the musical requirements of the time and the translated foreign work—inexpedient alike because it is hackneyed and in its performance safe to provoke comparison and because it is not written in the spirit of either our country's poetry or her music—where are the characters which can be played and the music which can be sung so as to attract and retain audiences?

It is evident enough that the change-over from ballad opera to the continuous-music manner was being made with extreme slowness and uncertainty, and our composers unquestionably showed a lack of talent and enterprise. They obviously delayed a development which should have been in turn reacting upon the quality of performance.

But we must not forget the insecure conditions of English opera performance. This involved seasons continually depending upon an unstable public support; while yet another difficulty was arising from the remarkable growth of interest in oratorio performance. This was to receive a new stimulus by the arrival in England of Mendelssohn and the immense vogue of 'Elijah.' This, again, coincided with the industrial development and the quick growth of provincial towns. The opening of the Leeds Town Hall in 1858 was the occasion of a musical festival such as has continued triennially ever since; a similar affair marked the opening of St. George's Hall in Bradford (now a cinema), and, in fact, choral societies sprang up in large towns all over the country. In London, the Sacred Harmonic Society, founded in 1892, was the agency through which the revival of the Handel Festivals began in 1857. Other organisations, such as that of John Hullah at Exeter Hall and St. Martin's Hall, the Vocal Association, founded in 1856, and Henry Leslie's Choir, showed the trend of public interest. In late years there were the Bach Choir and the choir started by Barnby, which ultimately became the Royal Choral Society.

The significance of this feature of English musical life as regards opera lies in the fact that the best singers were being gradually withdrawn from the stage to the concert platform, and the attention of English composers was directed into the same channels. In spite of the fact that many engagements were given formerly to foreign singers at the festivals, it was not long before our own people were able to specialise in this art and to hold their own. It may be said that this was a proof of the natural inability of English singers to succeed in opera; but one cannot ignore altogether the combination of circumstances which had arisen. The economic difference between stage and concert-room performances is sufficiently great, as all Continental countries have understood, to prevent the former from prospering without some subsidy. It was natural enough that those

concerned should follow a career which held out the greatest hopes of lucrative employment and recognition.

The foreign opera singers who came over to take part in Italian and German opera⁽²⁾ came from established opera-houses. The tradition and training of these enabled them to cope with the changes and growth in operatic styles; whereas ours accepted any precarious engagements that were going, for performances in which the question of style in a really national sense was not understood.⁽³⁾

The position of affairs changed greatly for the better in certain respects when Carl Rosa began work in 1875, and at one time it seemed as though a solution might be found. Looking back now it can be seen that the system was only the old one over again, temporary leases, provincial touring and consequent instability. It is tempting to speculate all the same what would have happened if, on Rosa's death, Augustus Harris, who had become deeply interested in the company's fortunes, had thrown himself heart and soul into its management, instead of transferring his attention to the international seasons which he inaugurated at Covent Garden in 1888. Still the fact remains that the Carl Rosa Company did notable work; it raised the standard of performance and produced operas by English composers which showed a very great technical and dramatic advance. Coming down to the closing years of the century we are on familiar ground; and there is no need to discuss the folly of opening the Royal English Opera House (the Palace Theatre) without a repertory. One can only say of the scheme that, though constructive in intention, it was self-destructive in constitution.

The Moody-Manners Company worked on the homeless lines of the Carl Rosa, and its activities could similarly lead to no permanent result. It is to be credited, however, with several laudable qualities. Charles Manners was unquestionably an alert and vigorous manager; he set great store upon a lively and dramatic stage work; and he insisted upon clear enunciation from his singers. It may be recorded that, when he gave a season at Drury Lane in 1904, he endeavoured to screen the orchestra for the sake of greater vocal intelligibility, but the L.C.C. considered the device he adopted to be dangerous, and it had to be given up. The net outcome of his work from 1898 to 1915 was that he was able to retire into private life, leaving behind him

(2) In 1832 a German company appeared at the King's Theatre, and gave 'Der Freischütz' and 'Fidelio'; and at the St. James's in 1840, 'Iphigénie en Tauride,' 'Jessonda' and others were introduced to London.

(3) Witness the enrolment in Bunn's company at Covent Garden of Schröder-Devrient and Malibran.

a number of well-trained singers and the record of having produced a number of English works.

Before going any further it would be as well to say something about the conditions of touring. The general plan adopted is to share profits with the local management. This naturally gives to the latter the right to exercise some control over the repertory. Obviously popularity is the prevailing idea of a repertory, and it has always been a matter of great difficulty with enterprising companies to get new or unfamiliar works into their scheme. Another drawback is that the local orchestra is called upon to give assistance to the travelling one; and, generally speaking, it is not at all suited to the task. Then again, the local theatre is averse to alterations in the times of performance—often necessary in the case of the longer operas—and to changes in the prices of admission.

Of later ventures the chief was the founding of the Denhof Company (primarily to give the 'Ring' in the provinces), after the Richter English production at Covent Garden in 1909. This, saved from financial disaster by Beecham, became his company, and was ultimately merged into the British National Opera Company. The B.N.O.C., which also toured, overcame the local managerial difficulty by leasing the theatre outright, and it could dispense with the local orchestra by travelling with one of the necessary strength. It could raise its prices and choose its repertory. But it suffered from instability and economic trouble and was dissolved in 1929.

What everyone interested wants to know is, what is best to be done and how best to do it so that English opera shall no longer be at the mercy of this or that disadvantage? Can we learn anything from 125 years of past experience, and is it possible to act upon whatever may be deduced therefrom? Judging by our own and foreign experience there is no question that all singers are at their best when singing in their own language. But the foreigner has had the inestimable advantage of having had a succession of composers so strongly gifted that not only could they produce works of a lasting nature, in which the singers could cultivate and develop their talents, but could force them into the alien repertories.

While not denying that the ideal performance of, say, a French opera, is one in French by French singers, an Italian or German company can and does give the same work in translation in its own theatre in a manner which commends itself to its own countrymen. Operatic history has shown that both Germany and Russia had to drive out Italian opera before they could create their own style of performance and composition. Our task becomes more and more difficult the longer we postpone tackling it. It is the lack of con-

tinuity in performance and of stability which prevents the cultivation of the necessary technique. Pushed to its extreme limits, this means that an English style of opera-singing and opera-writing can never be really achieved unless it is built up on a more frequent production of native composition. That has been the universal practice abroad and if the statistics were collected we should be surprised at the number of failures it has taken to produce a masterpiece. Those who are afraid that opera-writing lies outside the reach of the English composer should bear this fact in mind.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century till to-day it must now be evident that conditions have been quite impossible; and that, in fact, everything points towards the combination of a permanent home, a subsidy, and a complete re-orientation of ideas, if we are to rid ourselves entirely of the dominating influence of foreign performance. This affects singers (and composers) in the most obvious way; flattery takes its sincerest form, and the result is insincere work. True expression is a personal, heart-felt thing and not a simulation of gesture and vocal tone. Foreign singers cannot give us the right lead for the formation of that national expression which is the outstanding quality of their performance. From the best of them we can learn artistry and thoroughness in technical matters, but thereafter we must go our own way.

The whole matter is intimately concerned with a country's language. It is not really very long since it was an accepted belief in England that Italian was the only suitable language for singing. Happily we have got beyond that point now if we have not altogether accepted the logical conclusion that if we do sing in English it must be the real thing. For how often do we not still hear mispronunciation of our vowel sounds and a neglect of consonants, especially the final ones? A lamentable relic indeed of the so-called 'palmy days' of Italian opera! Can we not also suppose that from the early days of ballad opera the English opera-goer has deemed intelligibility in performance to be essential? When foreign opera is heard the ordinary person is not sufficiently acquainted with the language to bother himself unduly with what it is all about; and he contents himself with beautiful singing. But when given in English, the whole atmosphere changes and there is nothing more annoying, not to say unendurable, than not to be able to distinguish one word from another owing to mispronunciation and careless enunciation. For from the *right blending of word and tone only* is it possible, in the first place, to give intelligibility and, in the second, for the singer to truly express himself. Good pronunciation and right enunciation must be considered as among the first essentials of good opera-

singing, and they will never be acquired by following foreign models where the word and tone problems are entirely different to ours. When our ideal opera is firmly established, we shall have to set to work to improve our translations.

It is now possible to some extent to see what may be made out of the present-day state of affairs. We have still with us the Carl Rosa Company, confined to touring, the Covent Garden Company built up out of the remains of the B.N.O.C. (when the latter was dissolved in 1929) and the company at the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells; while in the background there hovers Sir Thomas Beecham and his Imperial Opera League which it is at least possible may still be set in action.

The League, however, has not set itself out to be constructive; it aims, rather, at giving thoroughly well-organised performances, in English, of operas which are for the most part unfamiliar or new. Now this is an admirable thing in itself, and there is no doubt that a well-handled English company, got together for the purpose, is capable, at any rate, of securing good enough performances of such a repertory to be well worth while. But it leaves untouched the general popular repertory, without which a permanent opera cannot exist. Moreover, there are the difficulties of touring, which the plan necessitates, and the present lack of a permanent theatre.

The Covent Garden Company has been fortunate in securing a subsidy, although the conditions of the grant necessitate touring since it is not to be supposed that provincial wireless licence-holders would be satisfied that London should be privileged to be able to either listen-in or be present at the actual performances. It is, however, too soon to estimate fairly the possibilities that lie ahead of the company; if permanent possession of the theatre can be obtained, if the theatre in fact is to be preserved, much might be done. It must, however, be pointed out that Covent Garden is not really suitable for a national opera, having no pit and not enough cheaper seats. Also it is more than doubtful whether it is advantageous that performances should be given in a building which is but one vast reminder of foreign tradition; and incidentally the fact that some members of the company take part in the international season is in itself a serious handicap from the point of view of a national style.

Coming to the Old Vic-Sadler's Wells, it is at once evident that we have here an organisation which approximates the most nearly to the requirements. There is a permanent home, and no touring. There is, however, no subsidy; and in addition to the necessity for making both ends meet the management is burdened with a building debt of over £20,000. Granted that the performances are on a small scale, with adroit management they should certainly possess, in time,

a character and independence of their own. The more sophisticated public has shown clearly enough that it is not interested in beginnings; and, in our present stage of the technical side of opera performance, it is a waste of time and money to appeal for its support. Let us frankly acknowledge that we cannot as yet do the big thing, however well we can do the out-of-the-way one, as we did with 'The Wreckers' at Covent Garden in the autumn. Should we not then consider whether it would not be as well to concentrate on helping the Vic-Wells? While money is needed to pay off the debt, it is also needed and must somehow be found so that a definite policy of introducing operas by English composers may be established. Without this last, even the work of this little company will bear barren fruit.

If, then, we can learn the job thoroughly, however we learn it, the time will come when it will be necessary to build an opera-house, on modern lines, capable of holding a large number of cheap seats. It is there that we shall hope to see in time highly organised performances in English with a standard and character of their own. The international seasons, which will doubtless continue elsewhere in London, will then be a stimulus, rather than an influence which, as things are, continually and inevitably forces our natural gifts into strange and unproductive channels.

CHORAGUS.

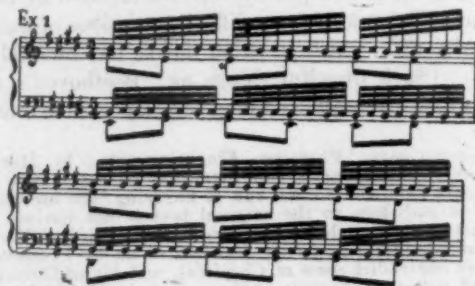
THE ASSOCIATED BOARD'S EDITION OF BEETHOVEN'S PIANOFORTE SONATAS

IN the last issue of *MUSIC AND LETTERS* I discussed Professor Donald Tovey's commentaries in the Associated Board's edition of Bach's 'Forty-eight,' and suggested that my article should (as dealing with the work of the same editor) be regarded as a preface to another on the Board's edition of Beethoven's sonatas—now published in three volumes,⁽¹⁾ together with a three-hundred-pages-long 'Companion' of complete analyses from Professor Tovey's pen. The 'Companion,' the general preface to the sonatas, and the commentaries on each of them individually, all bear the same signature; and I propose to discuss them as one whole—not repeating anything said last October which is as applicable to Professor Tovey's editorship of Beethoven as to his editorship of Bach. The 'Companion' and the sonata volumes occasionally, indeed, overlap to a slight extent, mainly in textual discussions; their chief purposes are different—problems of composition in the one case, of performance in the other. Some interactions between these two are, of course, inevitable—indispensable, indeed.

Textual problems must needs be among any editor's most primary concerns. Professor Tovey quotes Charles Bannelier's remark that an absolutely correct and authentic edition of Beethoven is 'an artistic chimera, a golden dream of criticism,' and justly questions its truth; uncertainties there will be, no doubt, but the outlook is far from being as hopeless as that. We have, in addition to any number of sketches, many final autographs, also printed copies annotated by the composer; there are practically none of those difficult questions of the authenticity of entire works with which in other fields the musical editor may have to deal. (Such dreadful things as 'Beethoven's adieu to the piano,' with which I was afflicted long ago, are so ludicrously obviously

(1) The title-page says 'Phrasing, Fingering, etc., by Harold Craxton.' Professor Tovey's commentaries call attention to not a few such details; and indeed, apart from the normal run of fingering, the usefulness (let alone the necessity) of additions to the original text is not obvious. In the last line of the last sonata, indeed, Mr. Craxton contradicts Beethoven's own unorthodox but admirable fingering, commented on by Professor Tovey (just as many editors contradict some of Chopin's), and his additional pedal-marks are scanty and somewhat casual; anyhow, it is in the highest degree vital that the student should always bear in mind Professor Tovey's remark on pedalling:—'No two instruments require the same treatment. The player must train his ear and judge by it.'

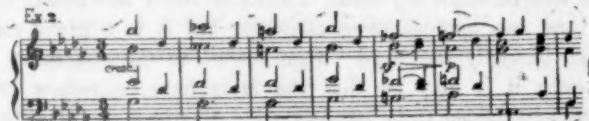
spurious!) Manuscript authority that may be final for literature is not, for any music, in itself final (Professor Tovey, I know, most rightly refuses to follow ordinary custom in playing those cacophonous slips of the pen in the seventh and ninth symphonies, which are quite clear in the autographs and are printed in all scores and parts), but there are particular problems in the sonatas for which it is conclusive; many sonatas are now most happily accessible in facsimile reproductions, and Professor Tovey does the student much service in supplying, to illustrate his points, photographs of passages in 'Les Adieux' and the 'Appassionata,' as well as of complete pages from the E minor and the sketches for the C sharp minor, in the possession of private friends. It may be by the composer's inadvertence that, for example, a *p* has dropped into the first movement of op. 22, or out of the finale of op. 13; but there is no inadvertence about these autographs and not a few other similarly authenticated passages where editors have been inclined to substitute their no doubt admirably tidy ideas for those of Beethoven. Particularly interesting is Professor Tovey's discussion, in the light of the only quite recently issued reproduction, of another passage in the 'Appassionata'—the end of the variations. All who have examined this will agree with Professor Tovey that the constant overlooking of the composer's plain directions for the last *ff* bar (a 'scattered' indication for the left hand only, with *arpeggio* against it, and *secco* against the cleanly struck right hand chord) is nothing less than amazing; every pianist will be grateful to have a most knotty problem of tone-production so comfortably solved. The famous controversy of A sharps *versus* A naturals just before the recapitulation in the first movement of op. 106 he argues at length and judiciously decides (to my own mind very rightly) in favour of the naturals; some other points, however, he leaves nicely balanced, without coming to any definite personal conclusion. To one place in the variations of op. 109—



where I have myself for many years had a sort of hankering after a D sharp (instead of F sharp) as the last bass note of the first bar,

he does not refer; not long ago the late Dr. John Petrie Dunn told me of some recently discovered evidence that Beethoven had so corrected a printed copy of the sonata, but I have not been able to verify this.

About this passage in the trio of the second movement of op. 26—



Professor Tovey has, I confess, quite converted me from my heresy (shared, indeed, by many other musicians) of wishing A flats instead of F's in bar two of this extract. He proves, to my repentant mind conclusively, that the whole trio should be phrased in four-bar groups (*the second complete bar carrying the first accent*), so that the repeated F's in the bass become Nos. 1 and 2 of the four beats, not (as ordinarily played) Nos. 2 and 3; 'the trio is much prettier in this light than in any other,' says Professor Tovey, and its increased vitality is indeed, to my ear, astonishing. When it is looked at this way, no one can wish for mere parallel thirds: the two-bars' F gives just the right artistic balance to the harmonic scheme. But, so far as I know, Professor Tovey is the first to see it. (It is, as he says, the whole point of the *sf* in this passage to come on a weak beat, just as that in the first section of the trio comes on a strong one.)

On matters of rhythm and phrasing Professor Tovey is rightly insistent; but he has no sort of use for narrow views, here or anywhere. Take the scherzo of op. 28:—

Enjoy Beethoven's ambiguous rhythm; in other words, do not be worried by the Prout-Riemann theory that this scherzo begins on the second half of a 6/4 bar. If Beethoven's rhythms are humorous enough to puzzle them . . . they may as well be allowed to play their pranks on less experienced listeners.

On the other hand, he points out that, though Beethoven writes the scherzo of op. 27, No. 1 in 3/4, not in 6/4 bars ('he attaches great importance to the prevalent harder accents of the short 3/4 bars . . . and great composers have learnt, quite as soon as other people, that fussy marking produces general inattention'), the curious way in which he writes out the repeats shows where the rhythmic periods lie, and that any neglect of them in performance makes the movement unintelligible. All through 'Companion' and commentaries, we see these finely discriminating instincts at work. 'Beethoven, the naïve listener, and other sensible people' do not worry if live music refuses to conform to *a priori* theoretical assumptions: 'it is disastrous to assume, without overwhelming evidence,

that he does not mean exactly what he writes.' Occasionally, perhaps, there may be such evidence: it is a musician's business to be musical, that is, to think—but, with Beethoven, he must think humbly.

Humble thinking, yes; but when something is definitely known, it may as well be definitely said. Professor Tovey has plenty of strong views, and can express them strongly; but it is a grave misuse of language to apply the word 'dogmatism' to the statement of hard facts—even if it may be that the facts have, somehow or other, previously happened to be unobserved. About all the arts, but about music far more than any other, plenty of words without knowledge are uttered; fundamentally serious thinking (call it either philosophical or scientific, or both, as you will) is much to seek. And, rigorously, it involves serious feeling too.

Neither 'Companion' nor commentaries are exactly easy reading; it is never for people in a hurry that Professor Tovey writes. But his wisdom is very often lightened by wit; and his style is individual literature, not jargon. The 'Companion'—a necessary adjunct to any of the three volumes of sonatas—may, at the student's first glance, appear a more complicated affair than it really is. Each movement of each sonata is dealt with very exhaustively; its formal structure is considered from phrase to phrase, and plenty of other matters, also, are touched upon as occasion arises. But Professor Tovey is quite justified in claiming that his method 'has been executed with careful avoidance of entering into minutiae'; elaborate as the 'Companion' is, it always takes the large view. On the other hand, it is true that there is a common 'more generalised view of musical form' which, as Professor Tovey rightly urges, is 'not so much general as fundamentally mistaken.'

Form is not a mould into which matter can be shovelled . . . We shall utterly fail to understand great music if we set up this or that general condition of form and texture as abstractly better than some other . . . It saves the trouble of individual analysis to call the early works 'imitative of Mozart and Haydn'; it even saves us the trouble of studying Mozart and Haydn. It saves many shocks to our self-complacency to excuse ourselves from learning the drastic messages of the later works by calling them 'formless.' But we can so call them only when we confine ourselves to a low conception of form.⁽²⁾

The preface, introduction, and conclusion of the 'Companion' discuss, in pages tightly packed with pregnant thought, form, tonality, and organic unity; the 'Tables of Key-relations' are more

(2) Here and elsewhere I group together remarks occurring at different places in 'Companion' and commentaries.

for technical theorists. Real analytical study, it is truly said, need never lead to the kind of playing that emphasises accidental details :—

If genuinely analytical performance can have a fault, that fault can only be a tendency to present the music with too little care for euphony and too much of the technical perfunctoriness that composers are apt to show in their own playing. The main lesson of the analysis of great music is a lesson of organic unity. And in the last resort it should investigate euphony also.

Nor should it encourage over-subtleties detrimental to the musical sense :—

The ear will never learn to recognise subtleties if the power of judgment has been debilitated by *a priori* fancies. Such fancies abound in the minds of those writers who believe that the 'logical' development of a composition consists in the way in which one theme can be derived from another. Such derivations are interesting as a feature of style. They come and go as the composer deals at one time with material that is more familiar to him, and at another time enters upon pioneer work. The student who fails to recognise them misses a certain amount of witty detail . . . but the student who, thinking that sonatas are built by thematic wit, begins by imputing it wherever he can see that there is a 'b' in 'both' will never understand anything at all. . . . Beethoven does not build upon accidental foundations. When people see more than is there they will be very unlikely to see all that is there.⁽³⁾

Overlap at times with the 'Companion' as they may, the equally full commentaries in the three sonata volumes have, naturally, a practical pianistic end in view (textual problems being initially decided). Here the long skilled experience of the player and the teacher comes to the fore. There is plenty of background to Professor Tovey's purism, and he does not fear speculations as to what Beethoven might have done with a century-later instrument at his service. He unhesitatingly carries the scherzo of op. 26 up to a high A flat (thereby making an only thus unmistakable rhythmical point that has a vital bearing on the phrasing of the trio, on which I have already commented), and goes indeed so far as to suggest some rather startling though highly interesting acoustic modifications of some passages in the first movement of op. 106; he advocates some subtle pedalling modernities in op. 27, No. 1, and for the recitatives in op. 31, No. 2. (Beethoven, he notes, was a highly unconventional

(3) Referring to the phrase of rising and falling thirds that links together the movements of op. 106, Professor Tovey writes:—'In these matters Beethoven does not, as is often supposed, foreshadow modern developments. The separate movements of a sonata lose their own momentum and achieve but a flaccid and precarious unity if they try to live by taking in each other's thematic washing. The modern works of symphonic size that have achieved thematic unity have done so by abandoning the sonata style and adopting the Wagnerian time-scale.'

pedal-virtuoso, renowned for all sorts of effects—most of them probably unrepeatable on our instruments—that he never indicated in print.)

The pages of the general preface to the commentaries discuss with trenchant luminousness various topics, textual and practical (those on the pianoforte's unique powers of imaginative suggestion, by pedalling or otherwise, are especially noteworthy); they are, however, on the whole, less of a forecast of what follows than is the preface to the 'Companion.' The exhaustive annotations of the individual sonatas, especially in Vol. III (from the 'Appassionata' onwards), are full of all sorts of reflections and suggestions, interpretative and technical; the immature player may not always see their drift, but for the teacher, if he or she is worthy to teach at all, there is overflowing abundant matter for permanent pondering. Both the particular and the general are there; let me mention a typical example of either. We are shown how the (often, I think, overlooked) dominant-seventh-plus-minor-triad basis of the scale at the end of the first movement of the 'Waldstein' suggests a left hand little finger on the middle beat to give the proper harmonic swing, with 'a good dash of pedal' on both accents; or again (and about the only too frequent overlooking of this I am quite sure):—

Some great virtuosos can play so fast that none of the points here mentioned can possibly matter. You will learn just as fine a technique by forming the higher ambition to show Beethoven's music truthfully to the listener.

Not that any extracts of dimensions quotable in a review can give any adequate idea of work that is so essentially all of a piece. The sheer mental size of these pages is indeed the strongest impression that they leave on the reader; breadth and depth, details and summing-up, are all there. And what they suggest is quite as valuable as what they say. Occasional unnecessary repetitions, occasional points rather overlaboured, occasional rather freakish allusiveness, there may be; but what matter? We must take great scholarship on its own terms, and be thankful; extremely thankful.

Still, to whet a student's interest, here are a round dozen of aphoristic words by the way, chosen practically at random, for him to turn about in his mind, as an earnest of what is to come:—

All movements require a certain freedom of play in their tempo; too many performers do their best to express dislocation instead of freedom.

[About op. 26.] A player who cannot find one tempo that suits the theme and all its five variations is like a princess who

has not been trained to walk with royal self-possession over a wide space in front of her.

So long as we avoid the wretched term *Second Subject*, and so long as we can tell a dominant from a tonic, the rest of our terminology cannot do much harm.

In the analysis, as in the performance of variations, we have no authority to prefer those points in which the variation resembles the theme to those points in which it differs.

If you once begin to rely on marks for what merely achieves normal sense, you will never develop any musical sense of your own.

The first condition for a correct analysis of any piece of music is that the composition must be regarded as a process in time. There is no such thing as a musical *coup d'œil*. Music exists in its own proper tempo, and is held together by vibrating in the memory.

Remember that there is no sense in correcting a wrong note by itself. A wrong note means two wrong intervals, one before it and one after.

Cadenzas, of all forms of music, ought to sound as if they were extemporised. Where there are any regular bars to be found, good playing will conceal them. Where there is any irregularity, good playing will make a point of it.

Music being an art manifested in works of art, the only correct theory of chords is an account of the way in which they happen.

A large part of the beauty of orchestral colouring consists in the fact that orchestral players are trained to meticulous accuracy.

The rules of ornamentation were rather in the melting-pot at this time, and the best we can do is to act according to musical sense, and not pretend that there is only one possibility when there are several.

[About difficulties for small hands.] The first thing to remember is that if the tone is properly balanced and graded, small gaps will not spoil the legato at all, whereas lumps and weak spots that a modern organ would never reveal will destroy all semblance of a legato on the pianoforte.

A few pen-slips, corrigible in a second edition, catch the eye. The first movement of op. 22 is not ('Companion,' p. 88) 'the last time Beethoven ended a development with a pause'—there is another instance in op. 28; the late '*alla tedesca*' is not ('Companion,' p. 192) in the op. 131 quartet; Handel was ten, not six, when Purcell died ('Companion,' p. 300). There is something wrong, I am not sure what, about the words 'bar 20' in the discussion of the slurs in the arioso of op. 110 (III, p. 217); in 'the crotchets in the bass become thematic and must not be brought out' (III, p. 192, about a passage in the first movement of op. 109) the word 'not' seems rightly omissible. One passage in the 'Companion' (p. 233) I cannot even conjecturally emend; introducing the discussion, already

mentioned, of the thematic transferences in op. 106, Professor Tovey writes: 'The movements of this Sonata, out of op. 110, show a subtle and elusive relation in their main themes.' What 'out of op. 110' may mean I have no idea; something seems to have accidentally dropped out, or dropped in from somewhere else. And, as regards the music, one of the rushing scales in the finale of 'Les Adieux' (bar 77) starts, rather dramatically but erroneously, on a submediant, instead of a tonic, foundation.

ERNEST WALKER.

ANOTHER TRIP TO THE CANADIAN FESTIVALS

On the evening of the 23rd of May, in 1923, Granville Bantock and I were judging at the festival at Prince Albert in Northern Saskatchewan. In the middle of the competition a storm broke over the town, and as the rain thundered on the roof a vast sigh went up from the audience—it had saved the wheat. There had been no rain at Prince Albert for eight months.

On the morning of the 2nd of last June I was judging at Moose Jaw in Southern Saskatchewan. The forenoon session was just over. It had grown suddenly dark, so dark that they had turned on the lights, and a high wind was shaking the building. As I reached the outer door a few drops blew against the glass. A woman in front of me shouted, 'The rain! The rain!' at the top of her voice, and in a moment it was taken up at the back, and 'The rain! The rain' surged round the hall. There had been no rain in Moose Jaw for three years. They and their wheat had lived on the winter snows, and this winter there had been no snow. The previous day the chairman of the festival had driven us out into the prairie. As far as eye could see was desolation, a desert of dust swept into furrows by the wind, piled six feet high in places, drowning the fences and the roads in a sea of dirt, spreading in its heartless grey monotony to the horizon; and underneath the wheat starving to death. Our sudden darkness had not brought the rain; it was a dust-storm which in five minutes blotted out the town. No one shed a tear, that we could see, or said a word. They were trained in adversity and lived on hope. Nowhere in our travels did we meet a happier or more hospitable crowd than these undaunted people living from day to day in sight of stark ruin.

I had been in the wheat-pit at Winnipeg (the greatest of its kind in the world) and had seen it at work—the man in the pulpit, ear-phones and mouthpiece strapped to his head (these are personal impressions with no pretence of technical accuracy), listening to the prices as they came in from all over the world and passing them on through the mouthpiece to the men in the gallery on the other side who chalk them up for all to see; and the yelling, gesticulating crowd of buyers and sellers, whose shout or gesture is a word of honour safer than the written contract; and I felt for Moose Jaw as I felt when,

as a little boy at school, I watched the football on Big Side and knew it was not yet for me, but prayed the day would come.

When Bantock and I reported on the Winnipeg festival of 1923 our remarks were received with amused scepticism. He was too good-natured; I was too Irish. He had been hypnotised by some red-haired contralto, and I had lost my heart to a choir that sang with a brogue. We did our utmost to get its famous male voice choir to come over for the Wembley Exhibition and very nearly succeeded. No one worked harder or more loyally to that end than Robertson,⁽¹⁾ but no one was more sceptical than he. Here is what he says now:—

In five years Winnipeg has shot to the front and is now, chorally, not only one of the largest festivals in the British Empire, but one of the very best.

It was one of the best, chorally, eight years ago also. I can say now whole-heartedly that if the solo singing, which was negligible in 1923 but is a very important branch now, were anywhere near the level of the instrumental and choral work there would be nothing in the British Empire to beat Winnipeg. There were three things (all choral) at that festival which were unforgettable. First, the singing by the Earl Grey Infants Choir (average age about five) of 'Little Jack Horner,' and 'Little Bo-peep.' Never have I seen such an abandonment of delight or such adoration as they showed to the woman who conducted them. I thanked Heaven that I was not the judge, as I could not have seen to write. And next, with nothing to choose between them, the Trinity Choir under Peter Temple in Healey Willan's 'Preserve us, O Lord,' and the Knox Choir in Stanford's 'Blue Bird,' both church choirs. O England, read, mark and learn! These three would have put Winnipeg in the top rank if it had produced nothing else.

The average of the solo singing was not great, the junior contraltos making the best showing as a class. But the children were excellent—I might say that throughout the tour the children were on the whole better than the grown-ups for reasons which will appear later on. I spent one delightful morning after another with them, judging them in solos and duets and trios. I had seen what wonderful results Miss Knocker and Miss Eaton had got in the instrumental classes at home by abandoning the rôle of judge and gathering the candidates round them, and talking to them as one of themselves; so I used to collect the children all together into one happy family and talk to them of imagination, and the charm of words, and the fascination of rhythm and the simple little things that make the rough places smooth, and

⁽¹⁾ Our team consisted of Sir Hugh Robertson, Mr. Harold Samuel, Mr. Maurice Jacobson and myself.

would then get them to sing the piece as a body. It was a sheer joy to make them all sing things like Gluck's 'Spring Song,' or Armstrong Gibbs's 'You Spotted Snakes,' or Peterkin's 'By a Bank,' before delivering judgment. There was a happy feeling in the air under these 'family' conditions. One small girl possessed so many of the virtues that she made a habit of winning all that she went in for, whether solo or ensemble. She was, incidentally, the only one who put up her hand when I asked if any of them had heard a nightingale. When another team won the trios and hers only came in a paltry second, a yell of delight went up, followed by shouts of laughter—we all knew why. Nobody at this festival seemed to mind whether they won or lost. Music to them was the 'food of love' and competition but the spice. This was the spirit we found practically everywhere. I can only remember one protest against a decision throughout the tour, and I think the gentleman in question was sorry he spoke.

Harold Samuel was a great success. He has a habit (quite unconscious) of looking very fierce when he gets up on to a platform to give his decisions, and the fiercer he looked the more delightedly they laughed. They just refused to be intimidated. It was a joy to see him at the piano with a swarm of children round him like bees drinking in every word and note. Jacobson had one pull over the rest of us. He has played every instrument in his time, from the comb to the euphonium, and we had to sit still and bite our nails because we could not show him up. But one evening our enemy was delivered into our hands. There had been a vocal solo class followed by a choral class and to save time the adjudications were to be given one after the other, Jacobson giving the first and Robertson the second. Jacobson on the platform (and off it) is a mixture between an india-rubber ball and a bottle of soda water and is prepared to invoke analogies between the kettle-drums and the *mer de glace* without fear of contradiction. On this occasion, however, he had to judge a class of Bach oratorio solos, and Robertson and Harold Samuel and I, knowing that we had plenty of time, went down the stairs at the back of the Playhouse and sat down on the lowest step to have a smoke. To our surprise every word he said came over to us as though he was standing beside us. In a second Robertson had his pencil out and began writing it down verbatim. Then in a weak moment Jacobson began to sing certain phrases as illustrations and wound up by saying that Mr. Plunket Greene was a very good chap and if they would just waylay him on the road home he would show them how to do it. We sat there and laughed while the tears ran down our cheeks as each new thing played into our hands. When Robertson went on to

the platform he announced to the audience that the other three judges had made an adjudication on Mr. Jacobson as a vocalist which he proposed giving them before tackling the choral class. Here followed a masterly marshalling of all the things the unfortunate chap had said about the others applied one by one to himself and winding up with the advice that Mr. P. G. was a very good chap and if he would just waylay him on the road home he would show him how to do it. The house fairly shouted with laughter, and so did we, and incidentally Jacobson's fortune was made.

Robertson had special opportunities which circumstances denied us and took advantage of them in a disgraceful way. The choral classes did not come on till the afternoon and evening and were always held in the big theatre, the Playhouse. During the mornings, when the rest of us were working hard in the smaller halls, he was either asleep in bed or smoking a pipe with his feet on the chimney-piece. Our appearances in the evenings were practically confined to running off the heats of the morning solos, while he had complete competitions of choirs, which are always the most interesting part of a festival. We could not protest in public whatever we told him in private. In addition to this, Winnipeg is largely peopled by Scotsmen—the only blot on its escutcheon—and he never lost an opportunity of bringing this in, even suggesting that Bach and Lully had been born in Glasgow. Whenever he saw that he was losing his audience (which was not often) he would call for some variant of 'Three cheers for Scotland!' to get them back on to the rails. But by a lucky chance we had the first word on the final night and England and Ireland came into their own and wiped Scotland off the map.

This was not the only occasion that Ireland was to the fore. I was at breakfast one morning in the Fort Garry hotel when two ladies came into the dining-room. I said to myself, 'I'll bet those two are Irish and as likely as not, from the looks of them, relations of my own.' They turned out to be two Irish cousins whom I had never seen.

Winnipeg owes a good deal of its proficiency and its enthusiasm to its situation. It lies far away in the prairie, out of the track of 'celebrity' concerts and the like, and it has never been bitten by the wireless craze. Music is part of its life and its festival is a civic event welcomed by the whole city. Its audiences are insatiable, their faces one broad smile; they turned a thousand people away one afternoon, and one evening the session was not over till midnight and not a soul had stirred! Here is a fine setting for a festival—singers, players, conductors; enthusiasm, knowledge, taste and sportsmanship, and audiences. Yet, as we know so well at H.Q., these go for nothing

if the management is not to match. And in this respect Winnipeg is twice blest—in its admirable committee, each member knowing his job and doing it, and its secretary, a man of vision, tenacious, tolerant, human, humorous—and a Scotsman.

Victoria, in Vancouver Island, was our next port of call, and Vancouver is on the Pacific Coast. There is no space to tell of the wonders of the journey through the Rockies; I wrote of it in 1923. It is another world than ours, remote, majestic, awesome, but so close to the Mother Country in its welcome that when we came to the 'Fairy Lough' of Sicamous I sent a telegram to my mother-festival in Wiltshire, just then starting at Devizes, wishing them God-speed from five thousand miles away in the Rocky Mountains.

The solo singing at Victoria was not very good. There were one or two girls' classes which were very fair, and the soprano class might have been excellent if they had not all, with one exception, belonged to the 'heartless' (in its literal sense) type. There was one fine mezzo among the contraltos who had a real touch of genius but was badly handicapped technically. She should have won the rosebowl for the best singer of the festival, but lost it to the tenor, who had none of her fine imagination but knew his business well enough to tip the scale. I pointed out the virtues and vices of each so diplomatically that I thoroughly propitiated both—or the reverse. There was, however, one ensemble performance which gave us a memorable thrill. A male-voice quartet was singing Morley's 'Now is the month of Maying.' As they progressed we became gradually aware that they were singing a nice comfortable set of parts entirely their own—none of your modern harmonies here—which fitted in some miraculous way into the whole but had nothing whatever to do with Morley. There was a delicious sleepiness about it which put it outside the realm of improvisation, and made it sound like a set of tired Waits who sang it like this every Christmas. Try as hard as we could we could not keep straight faces and we wept with laughter. The audience caught the infection and soon the house was in a roar. It was a star turn, enjoyed, apparently, as much by the performers as the others. We are not sure even now that they were not 'pulling our leg.'

I can only speak of the music from my own end of it, but there were several very fair choral performances at which I was present and others of which I heard, and one, at least, brilliant young pianist. I took part in one instrumental adjudication. Harold Samuel had cajoled me by flattery and lachrymose appeal to waste a whole morning with him judging the organ class. I found out afterwards that he wanted to have a heavy-weight beside him when he gave his

decisions. He and I came back later on from Vancouver and gave one of the jolliest recitals we have ever given together.

The chief hall in Vancouver is not an ideal one, as we found when we gave a recital on the first evening to an accompaniment of zooms and bells of trams and honking motor-horns. If the platform could have been trained to revolve with an easy swing, those in the far east and west might have caught a note or a smile now and again. As it was, those in the near south got it all for better or for worse. Also after drought it became slightly porous. I was delivering judgment one evening and was puzzled by a series of 'plops' at my elbow. Suddenly someone in the audience put up an umbrella and I gave a scared look at the piano and hurriedly shut down the lid. But Vancouver may have all the faults it likes, I love it still. If anyone can show me anything more beautiful than the view across the water from the Coal-harbour I will burn my boats and go there. The actual city is like many other western towns, but it is set in a paradise. When I compare the shoddy yellow-grey monotony of the London suburb with the joyous coloured outskirts of Vancouver, I cringe in spirit. Beauty seems to pervade its scene and to sweeten its conventions. If you asked a man the way he would take you by the arm, like a friendly Belfast policeman, and lead you within sight of what you wanted. If they did some minor repair for you in a shop, they waved away any idea of payment and said it was a pleasure to be of service to you. Even the competitors, no matter how badly they were cursed or chaffed or withered, were a bundle of smiles the moment it was done. I remember the singing of Bach's 'Et exultavit' by a class of mezzo-sopranos, who had treated it as a gloomy dirge and had received some home-truths in stunned silence. When I got them on to the platform and made them do it all together they sang it with a joyful abandon that could not have lived with resentment. All Harold Samuel's attempts at dignity were again shattered by the delighted laughter which greeted him the moment he walked up the steps.

As at Winnipeg, the children were far better than the grown-ups. The singing of the little girls in Shaw's 'Lullaby' was beautiful by any standard. I hate boys' solo singing. They are all right in choirs, where their peculiar timbre is just right, but I groan in spirit when I have to judge them alone. I had to take it all back here—no hooting, no glassy-eyed indifference, no oyster swallowing among the lot, and three of them quite first-rate. The winner of the baritone class told me afterwards that I had given him the boys' solo prize at the Dublin Feis in 1912!

The best solo performance of the festival was that of the bass winner

of the men's challenge class on the final night. He sang 'Der Doppelgänger' superbly. It had been sung earlier in the week as an 'own choice' by the same girl who had won the contralto class at Victoria, and sung remarkably well. But it was an illuminating illustration of the woman's point of view on the imaginative side as opposed to the man's—a lament of sad remembrance, without a curse or an outcry or a shake of the fist in the whole of it. The best class was that of the 'young singers.' I never hope to hear anything more delightful from every point of view than the performance of the five finalists of these grown-up children. When I saw and heard the choirs, too—their numbers and their brilliant work and enthusiasm—I was thrilled at the thought of what they had accomplished (a ten days' festival now) since Bantock and I had seen them make their precarious start in 1923.

Here, too, were old friends and pupils, and English houses. Many of the latter stand on the edge of the sea with a view of mountain and water which must be seen to be believed. The secretary of the festival, Mr. Stanley Bligh, has one of these and he told us that exactly twenty-four hours after the New Zealand earthquake a tidal wave washed over his sea-wall and garden right up to the house. Vancouver has plenty of rain, but its disposition radiates sunshine and fun. There were plenty of funny things—the silent lady who came up to me one morning when I arrived at the judge's table, held her previous day's marking-sheet silently under my eyes for a moment and went silently away, and later on in the ear-test class showed up a series of unbarred minims on the middle E as her solution of Harold Samuel's masterly one-finger exposition of a tune; and plenty of amusing people, chief among them my old friend 'Jimmie' Jamieson of 'The Vancouver Province' who would make the blackest sky turn blue—another Scotsman.

It was hard to leave Vancouver. When I pass those bungalows and petrol stations and hoardings and the other poisonous parasites on the green surface of old England I shut my eyes and think of the Coal-harbour and the Lost Lagoon and the happy houses and the splendid flaxen-haired children, girls and boys alike, in the 'Whoopee' or 'Can't bust 'em' trousers (whichever you like), and groan in spirit and 'wish as I was there.'

Lethbridge is a small prairie town in Alberta, but quite ready to fight anybody. The shop where I had my hair cut would put Bond Street to shame with its equipment of antiseptic bowls for razors and scissors, electric curry-combs and cages of canaries. Talking of canaries, one of the ladies I met there told me she had a canary who was fourteen years old. He was taken ill one cold day and she

put him inside her dress to warm him. He used to be taken ill from morning to night after that until at last she realised that it was a put-up job and gave him a bit of her mind. He once had a wife and children and though he is now a widower he pretended last spring that they were there and talked to them and prepared their food for them. What a lesson in imagination, O singers!

The festival did not start auspiciously. The soloists were desperately in earnest. The basses thought that because the translation of Schumann's 'Waldeggespräch' began with:

The way is dark, the night is cold

the song was a funeral anthem; while the children's choirs, evidently looking upon singing as a torturing type of holiday task, were one and all on the verge of tears. In the evening Robertson and I spoke out strongly about this attitude and stuck to it though we were conscious that every minute we were wading deeper into a freezing mixture of resentment and indignation. And then there came along four male-voice choirs representing Rotary and Gyro and other clubs, knowing nothing about singing but full of uproarious spirits, and in five minutes vindicated all we had been saying and showed the audience, in the happiest manner, what fun a musical festival could be. People cheered up after this, though the soloists, with the exception of three really sporting tenors and the soprano winner and contralto runner-up of the Stutchbury Cup, had not much enterprise either in their interpretation or in their choice of songs. The final evening went off in a blaze of glory and I think that they came to the conclusion that the judges were not such bad fellows after all, and were sometimes right.

The Saskatchewan festival is divided into two, South (Moose Jaw) and North (Saskatoon). If Moose Jaw was not conspicuous for its solo singing—a Bach aria by a mezzo-soprano and a class of small girls in Byrd's 'Lullaby' being the best—it made up for it in other ways. We arrived in time for breakfast and Robertson at once claimed the dark-haired waitress as a Scotswoman. With withering scorn she repudiated it and said she was French. Nothing daunted he tried again, and asked what sights there were to be seen in Moose Jaw. She said there was a Whipsnade Zoo with elk and bears and such like. 'Any monkeys?' said Robertson with a confident twinkle in his eye. She looked at him coldly for a long time and said, 'Not inside,' and turned to the next table.

I was woken up at 2 a.m. on the last night by the fire alarm and I roused up Robertson next door. The hotel was full of choirs and we found the passages full of people in various states of *déshabille*. There was no smoke and no smell of fire and it was evidently a false alarm.

We looked out of the window and found the street in front of the hotel full of women in dressing-gowns and evening frocks with their arms full of hats!

Great hats, small hats,
Lean hats, brawny hats,
Brown hats, black hats,
Grey hats, tawny hats.

Harold Samuel, hearing the noise in the passage and not having heard the fire alarm, leapt out of bed and cursed every mother's son of them for waking him up. Somebody said something about a 'choir,' as he thought, and he slammed his door and went back to bed, spitting venom at festivals and fiddles and pianofortes and especially at choirs. He was not so far wrong, as it was a member of one hilarious choir, as we heard afterwards, who was responsible. He had mistaken the fire alarm for a corkscrew.

But Moose Jaw, as I said at the beginning, will always have a special place in my esteem. I shall not easily forget that dust-storm, or the heat and misery of it, as I sat at the judge's desk. That was but a single experience to me; they lived in it day after day. I felt half ashamed that I was going back to green England and they were left facing grey ruin. They were perfect hosts, *rebus in arduis*, and we shall always remember it to them.

Robertson and Samuel travelled to Saskatoon by air. Jacobson and I preferred the humble sleeping car. They withered us with contempt and said we belonged to the Stone Age. We got into our berths at 11 p.m. and arrived in comfortable time for breakfast. They got on board their machine at 2.10 a.m. and got into Saskatoon at 3.45, perished to the bone, and had to go to bed with hot bottles, and when they turned up to breakfast were quite unfit for civilised society. We, besides having travelled in luxury, had seen our taximan, a huge man with one arm and a cork leg, load nine bags and trunks in, over and under our taxi all alone (he refused all help) and drive us to the hotel with one hand like a competitor at Brooklands.

Saskatoon was indeed different from Moose Jaw—flowers, trees, birds, lawns. Sprinklers everywhere, keeping the grass green. The great Saskatchewan river flows at its feet and there is water to waste. The same happy welcome here. We had a delightful evening at the vice-president's house when Harold Samuel was made to do everything from improvisation to performing dogs; a real lazy afternoon-tea in the garden of the lady who had won everything possible at Prince Albert in 1923; a supper-party at an English house which might have come straight out of the Test Valley; and a dinner-party

where I made friends for life of the two children, bursting with pride at helping to wait at table, by smuggling them brandy-snaps when their mother was looking the other way. Her father had been at Clifton in my day. My old friend, who had been the president of the festival at Edmonton in 1923, came over specially and stayed with us the whole time, so we had a happy wind-up to our tour.

The singing in my branch was again poor. There was one small red-haired girl who was really good. I asked her whether she was Irish or Scotch. She said she was Scotch, so I determined I would say nothing about it. Her father, however, told me that her mother was Irish and that all her music came from her mother, so I let Robertson know.

There was a good class of women's duets which gave me a conspicuous illustration of the chief difficulty which the unhappy teacher has to face when dealing with the other sex. The piece was Frank Bridge's delightful two-part song 'The Wattle.' I got the teams together on the platform and bullied them and chaffed them and begged them to smile, assuring them that it was the key to the interpretation of the happy thing. They responded magnificently, with one exception. She stood aloof and surveyed me with icy contempt, her every look a reprimand. She sang the notes correctly and left the platform with dignity. She did not see the fun of it, but the rest of us did. The unkindest cut of all came after the festival. Harold Samuel and I gave a recital on the Monday. In the programme I was described as 'the world-famous tenor.' I could have borne the first half of it; the sting was in the tail.

There can be little doubt that the weakest part of the Canadian festivals is the solo singing. There is no lack of voices. Many of them were brilliant, strong, fresh and true—the Canadian singer has a national faculty for singing in tune—and in many cases they had an excellent idea of the physical handling of words. I can say, too, in all sincerity that their taste is impeccable and their platform manners a pleasure to the eye. But though many said their words well, hardly anyone made them the true source of inspiration. I spoke earlier of 'heartless' singing. This was the fault I had to find with all the adult classes—the women's classes especially. They were all trying to get something for nothing. In other words they had every wish to be dramatic, suave, fierce, tender, sad or merry, but were not ready to pay for any of them in the currency of emotion. In many cases, too, the words, though well delivered technically, bore no relation to the meaning of the song and were not coloured by its mood. The lady who marooned herself in 'The Wattle' was the active exponent *pro tem.* of the inertia which most of the others

passively accepted as the limit of their horizon. I would ask them one and all whether they are really getting the *fun* out of singing. Have they the *enterprise* which sends them swimming in the deeps, or are they content to paddle safely in the shallows? Have their childhood's fairies faded with their adolescence, and is the written note the end of all things or is it the romantic symbol of *imagination*? When they get up to sing will they put on the chain-mail of respectability and hold their song at sword's length, or will they throw safety to the winds and hand the keeping of their soul to *emotion*? It will never let them down. When it comes in at the door self-consciousness flies out of the window. It lives with beauty and 'beauty lives with kindness' and happiness is their handmaid. The nearer you are to laughter the nearer you are to song. The two who sang 'Der Doppelgänger'—far as the poles apart—gave us this trinity of song. They saw the tragedy in imagination, walked unafraid into its world and lived there for its moment. Did they get no *fun* out of that? Away, ye men of rules!

If you would see the truth of it go and hear the children's choirs in Winnipeg and Vancouver, where self-consciousness has withered in the flame of adoration; or the church choirs throughout the four provinces, where every mind is tuned to one end and beauty is in possession. Robertson, writing to me from the Bournemouth festival, says:

'What do they know of England who only England know?' Choirs from the island of Guernsey have come here and put ours to shame. So it was, too, in Canada where we got choir after choir, made up in many cases of foreigners using, and using to perfection, the good old English language. To see choirs of Japanese and Chinese, as we did in Vancouver, and to hear them singing graciously and happily the songs that are ours by right and theirs only by adoption is something to remember. That great new country has no cultural background like ours, but the new generation is close at our heels and we shall soon need to look to our laurels.

Jacobson told me that while the chamber music classes were few and disappointing, the string standard was very high, and that orchestras, generally, were very good, some of the string orchestras good enough to be judged from a professional standard; and that there was a surprising number of entries for every sort of wind-instrument from the flute to the melophone (a species of small French horn). Distances meant nothing to these enthusiasts. One clarinet player drove two hundred and fifty miles in an open car through a series of severe dust-storms to play a piece which lasted two minutes. What about *enterprise*, O singers?

Harold Samuel tells me that there was a remarkable amount of

brilliant promise and in many cases of good teaching among the young pianists. The weak point, he says, was the apparent want of opportunity for the wider musical training and general development of the student. These are, of course, to be found at the Toronto Conservatoire, but Toronto was not one of our festival towns. He mentions particularly three young 'star' performers: a boy of 11 at Vancouver, a boy of 15 at Winnipeg and a girl of 15 at Lethbridge. I heard them all and do not wonder he was so enthusiastic. The Vancouver boy made bricks without straw in a way that made us both chuckle all over. He was thoroughly humbled by two other 'grown-up' candidates. One of these had been taught by a local man who had 'once studied in Leipzig'; the other had been a student in Edinburgh. Both told him that his views on Bach-playing were completely wrong. It was no use pointing out to the Edinburgh lady that Bach was born at Eisenach and only went to Edinburgh for the golf at St. Andrew's. She knew better, and put the judge in his proper place.

Harold saw us off on the *Montcalm* from Montreal. He had to go to America to work, while we slipped down the St. Lawrence for a thousand miles through the Belle Isle Straits and the whales and the icebergs to the open sea. Even the icebergs were courteous to their English friends. I was standing with Jacobson watching a specially big one half a mile away, and I said: 'I wish that chap would split in two,' and as I said the words it divided gently in half, bowed to us and went off in its respective directions. I do not expect this to be believed, but it is the literal truth.

One thing on that journey I never expect to see the like of again. We passed Quebec at sundown. The hills were deep blue-black and purple against the evening light, the sunset orange to opal and, high up, pink cirrus with pale green blue between. The air was dead still. The glow enveloped the town and shone upon the windows of the Château Frontenac. As the light failed the city turned to a velvet black and faded slowly out, and as we stood entranced and watched it die away a peal of lovely bells on the other side of the river sounded the Angelus.

And so home from the new to the old, the mother of them all, the funny old country whose motto is 'Always 'as been,' where we build little skyscrapers and say 'What a big boy am I!' and turn out countless omnibuses and forget to number them, and turn our backs to the traffic, and cannot get a drink of water on a train—but the only country in the world where you can walk on the grass.

HARRY PLUNKET GREENE.

WILLIAM COWPER

HIS ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION OF MUSIC

I

IN his letters and poems William Cowper made certain very definite pronouncements concerning music which have gone into all the anthologies. He also made others, equally fine, though perhaps not so striking, which have escaped the anthologies altogether. And he drew from music various figures and illustrations which, it may be, are even more full of suggestion and character than his universally familiar remarks; as for instance:

Man is a harp whose chords elude the sight,
Each yielding harmony disposed aright;
The screws reversed (a task which if he please
God in a moment executes with ease)
Ten thousand thousand strings at once go loose,
Lost, till he tune them, all their power and use.

Retirement, 325-330.

This poet's ideas and terms were naturally those of his century, the eighteenth, and they were, moreover, those of the literary man, not of the musician trained in the special language of his art. Therefore what Cowper said about music rather needs to be translated a little for the twentieth century reader.

More importantly, however, his philosophical ideas are those of a strict Calvinist, a Puritan whose religion was of the severest and most austere kind. Cowper, religious matters apart, was from his fiftieth year to his sixty-fifth one of our most delightful humorists. He was genial right into the very heart and soul of him. He loved graceful music in what he considered its right place, as dearly as he loved the sounds of nature. God is the Creator who

Sends nature forth, the daughter of the skies,
To dance on earth, and charm all human eyes.

Retirement, 795-796.

A friend who can sing is a happy partner in making verse complete:

My numbers that day she had sung,
And gave them a grace so divine,
As only her musical tongue
Could infuse into numbers of mine.
The longer I heard, I esteemed
The work of my fancy the more,
And e'en to myself never seemed
So tuneful a poet before.

Catharina, 17-24.

Commerce, spreading blessings all over the world, makes it possible for humanity to have art of every kind, and especially music :

She guides the finger o'er the dancing keys,
Gives difficulty all the grace of ease,
And pours a torrent of sweet notes around,
Fast as the thirsting ear can drink the sound.

Charity, 109-112.

But although Cowper, knowing happiness during those fifteen years, recognised that joyousness was good, and was well aware that music was at once a cause and an expression of joyousness, his troubled religion interfered with his attitude towards this and the other arts when the subject of the work was religious, or when art seemed likely to turn men from thoughts of their future existence. He therefore had to condemn music. And he had to condemn it in directions where, for the greater portion of Western Europe, it has its true home and does some of its noblest work.

The problems that occupied Cowper with regard to music have hardly any existence nowadays. Yet it is profitable to consider them; first because Cowper was a great man, knowledge of whose mind is finely educative, and secondly because those very problems have seriously influenced the condition of music in this country during the last three hundred years.

In this short article we cannot touch on more than two or three points in his general conception of music, and we obviously cannot apply even these at any length to the difficulties which surround our music of to-day. We shall, in fact, more or less confine ourselves to two only of the better known musical pronouncements of the poet whose two hundredth birthday was celebrated on November 26 last; and in our remarks we shall do little more than try to indicate the nature of his mind and the way music fails to appeal to such a mind.

II

The lines which open Book VI of *The Task* are quoted almost as often as any other versified expression that bears on music. At first glance they seem too simple for analysis and exposition. But embodied in them is an entire philosophy of music and the musical mind; and when this is abstracted and spread out a little, it explains a good deal about music and our varying attitude towards it. And, of course, it also sets Cowper himself up in a clear light.

The passage illustrates his acceptance of the art, as other passages

illustrate his rejection of it. The introductory thought is of a general and 'classical' nature:

There is in souls a sympathy with sounds;
And, as the mind is pitched, the ear is pleased
With melting airs, or martial, brisk, or grave:
Some chord in unison with what we hear
Is touched within us, and the heart replies.

The Task, VI, 1-5.

Cowper uses the terms 'sympathy,' 'pitched,' and 'chord' with no thought for their meaning in the science of music, but as they have gone into our literary language from the musical science of the Greeks. But when we apply their musical significance (in the special sense) to his remarks, we obtain an exceedingly vivid understanding of the idea he is propounding.

Pitched means tuned, and tuned means regulated or determined by the law of the scale or gamut. The notes which constitute a scale are all the result of a mathematical calculation of the vibrations of the medium which makes the sound; and the series of sounds forms the law or harmony of the scale. We speak about being tuned or keyed up to a certain pitch.

Then sympathy means agreement, or mutual sensibility. When the damper-pedal of the piano is put down, all the chords or strings of the instrument are left free to vibrate in sympathy with the string that is struck; and it is this 'sympathetic vibration' that brings about the rich characteristic tone. For all the strings, pitched to agree with one another, and established therefore in a state of mutual sensibility, respond to the blow given to their companion, and the minute sounds that are created by their 'sympathetic vibration' go to swell the tone it makes. Certain strings will be so very closely in sympathy with the one that is struck that we can actually hear the sounds they give forth. Of course, the 'sympathetic' notes are never the same as the note which is struck. They are the notes of the harmonic chord.

Cowper's 'Chord in unison' is merely a literary phrase. And his *unison* repeats the idea of his *sympathy*.

The reference to 'melting airs, or martial, brisk, or grave,' suggests that the writer is thinking of music proper. But the continuation makes it clear that what he is inspired by is actually the formless tones of bells, which are not strictly instruments of the art of music:

How soft the music of those evening bells,
Falling at intervals upon the ear
In cadence sweet, now dying all away,
Now pealing loud again, and louder still,
Clear and sonorous, as the gale comes on!

Ibid., 6-10.

And the sequel to this makes it clear further that music for him is primarily a matter of immediate personal association :

With easy force it opens all the cells
Where memory slept. Wherever I have heard
A kindred melody, the scene recurs,
And with it all its pleasures and its pains.
Such comprehensive views the spirit takes,
That in a few short moments I retrace
(As in a map the voyager his course)
The windings of my way through many years.

Ibid., 11-18.

A little later in the poem Cowper returns to the subject. It is a winter morning. He is walking beneath the trees :

The vault is blue
Without a cloud, and white without a speck
The dazzling splendour of the scene below.
Again the harmony comes o'er the vale;
And through the trees I view the embattled tower
Whence all the music. I again perceive
The soothing influence of the wafted strains,
And settle in soft musings as I tread . . .
No noise is here, or none that hinders thought.
The redbreast warbles still, but is content
With slender notes, and more than half suppressed . . . (78)
Stillness, accompanied with sounds so soft,
Charms more than silence. Meditation here
May think down hours to moments. Here the heart
May give a useful lesson to the head,
And learning wiser grow without his books.

The Task, VI, 62-87.

And so he lets us see not only that music is for him something of associative character, but also that it is something which is of value chiefly in so far as it stimulates thought.

His 'cadence sweet,' by the by (line 8) is a literary term for sound that is *modulated* or made *proportional*, as in the following thought (which, like that exceedingly delicate mention of the 'slender notes' of the redbreast in line 78 of the passage from *The Task*, proves the observer's rare sensitiveness to natural sound) :

Nature, exerting an unwearied power,
Forms, opens, and gives scent to every flower . . .
She fills profuse ten thousand little throats
With music, modulating all their notes;
And charms the woodland scenes and wilds unknown
With artless airs and concerts of her own.

Table Talk, 690-697.

And so Cowper shows plainly that he wants music to affect him in two ways. He wants it first to stimulate memory, and secondly to help

thought and meditation. In this he hints at what is actually the beginning and end of the art; though he himself could not carry his understanding of it to the final point, partly because of his religion, which made him reject everything that might run counter to devotional matters, and partly because he could not lose himself in the vast super-intellectual sphere which is music's abiding place.

We all react to music personally and subjectively. It follows therefore that music gains the major part of its power over us from its capacity to associate itself with events and happenings and situations. However big it may become in its forms, and however pure or absolute in its emotional substance, it still retains the definiteness and actuality of the song or the dance from which it started, and its spirit remains fundamentally as clear and simple. All of Bach's graver or more contemplative music derives directly from the Lutheran hymns and their tunes; and the 'characteristic' music of every composer of modern times is a picture in sound of themes and subjects characteristic of his time and place. We understand music (in the spiritual or imaginative sense of understanding) by our recognition of what it belongs to and expresses; and that recognition, since it is the outcome of an action of the memory, is something subjective or personal. Therefore music is essentially associative. It is, in the language of the eighteenth century, an imitative art. When we cannot understand a work, it is because we cannot find in it anything which conforms to something already active in our minds; in other words, because we have nothing already alive in our consciousness by which we can bring it to life.

But so long as we need this vivifying correlation to be strictly and exclusively *personal*, we remain only on the threshold of the art. Our position is parochial, not universal. And moreover, our process of self-recollection or self-realisation remains but elementary; for so long as the process confines itself to what interests the *obvious* ego, we are kept from truly realising ourselves to the full. If in this case we are composers, we become miniaturists. If we are listeners, we become what are called 'simple lovers of music,' not musicians absolute, and as such we find our pleasure and profit in music ending with familiar hymns, national songs, and pieces cast in thoroughly conventional forms and rhythms. Composers like Bach and Beethoven apprehend particular things in their universal aspect; and realising in this way the universality of things, they also realise themselves to the full, with for result a full expression in their art of their entire

personality, and the consequent creation of works of the greatest and most complete kind.⁽¹⁾

Cowper, as an individual who loved music, remained on the threshold because he could not yield himself to its greater manifestations. He therefore failed ever to find himself to the full in it. Furthermore, as the lines from *The Task* intimate very plainly, he wanted it to stimulate properly logical thought. Dr. Johnson condemns music because, while it gives him no ideas, it interferes with his contemplation of what ideas he may already have had. Cowper, on the contrary, accepts it because it helps him into the mood he needs for contemplating his ideas. In the same way did another poet enjoy it—Coleridge, who went so far as to say at the end of his life that he was sure he could write as good poetry as ever, if only he could live in the uninterrupted enjoyment of good music.

Myriads of men and women are in the same position as Cowper and Coleridge. It is a good position to be in. But it is not the best. Music is a super-intellectual art. The state it induces is that of a spiritual rapture. And Cowper was sufficiently aware of this out of his philosophy, however much he failed to be aware of it out of definite personal experience and in respect of pure, independent music. He expresses himself nobly on the matter. In the quasi-musical surroundings of his winter morning walk he finds that the 'heart may give a useful lesson to the head,' which is the faith of the musician; and he is inspired to the realisation that

Meditation here

May think down hours to minutes:

which is as final a statement concerning the effect of music on the musician as any English poet has ever arrived at.

III

Cowper's condemnation of music is at its most severe in the matter of the Handel Commemoration of 1784. John Newton had preached

(1) In addition to what the composers do (consciously or unconsciously) in this direction, the art continues the process, until in due time its works become classical. Browning says, in *Fifine*, cxxix, concluding lines:

the historic personage
Put by, leaves prominent the impulse of his age:
Truth sets aside speech, act, time, place, indeed; but brings
Nakedly forward now the principle of things
Highest and least.

And Sir John Davies, the Elizabethan poet, said in his *Immortality of the Soul* (with the help two hundred years later of Coleridge, who modified some of the original expressions):

Thus doth she, when from individual states
She doth abstract the universal kinds,
Which then, re clothed in divers names and states,
Steal access through our senses to our minds.

'She' is the 'poetic genius,' or art simply, or the substance of art.

a sermon against 'setting the King's message to music,' in which he had censured us for 'singing for our diversion' the details of 'the fearful doom awaiting us if we continue obstinate.' Newton's idea as to the text of the 'Messiah' is not quite accurate. And the preacher falls into flat rhetoric when he describes Handel's orchestra as consisting of the psalmist's 'cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of instruments.' But this does not affect the essentials of his case; and Cowper writes to him in stern approval:

The subject indeed is awful, and your manner of representing it is perfectly just. A people so musically mad as to make their future trial the subject of a concert must excuse me if I am merry where there is more cause to be sad; for melancholy as their condition is, their behaviour under it is too ludicrous not to be felt as such.

He also spoke on this theme in *The Task*:

Man praises man. Desert in arts or arms
Wins public honour; and ten thousand sit
Patiently present at a sacred song,
Commemoration-mad; content to hear
(Oh wonderful effect of music's pow'r!)
Messiah's eulogy for Handel's sake!
But less, methinks, than sacrilege might serve—
(For, was it less, what heathen would have dared
To strip Jove's statue of his oaken wreath,
And hang it up in honour of a man?)
Much less might serve, when all that we design
Is but to gratify an itching ear,
And give the day to a musician's praise.
Remember Handel? Who, that was not born
Deaf as the dead to harmony, forgets,
Or can, the more than Homer of his age?
Yes—we remember him; and, while we praise
A talent so divine, remember too
That His most holy book from whom it came
Was never meant, was never used before,
To buckram out the memory of a man.
But hush!—the muse perhaps is too severe;
And, with a gravity beyond the size
And measure of th' offence, rebukes a deed
Less impious than absurd, and owing more
To want of judgment than to wrong design.

The Task, VI, 631-657.

This is exceedingly bitter. And whether or no it appears a trifle incoherent, it is, in the way it begs the question, very certainly a little hasty and headlong. Cowper is offended by a man, Handel, whom he admires for his genius, treating with what he considers disrespect something which he himself holds in the highest and purest regard. In the end he dismisses the matter contemptuously; it is too silly

to be really offensive, he says—too much mere bad taste, so that the judge who would admonish such an action really belittles himself.

It was inevitable that Cowper should be one of those who objected to any music at all on Sundays. And from the letter which he wrote to John Newton on September 9, 1781, it would seem that he was particularly against clergymen making use of it at any time for pure pleasure.

This letter is, from the point of view of music, the most important of all. Cowper was nearing his fiftieth birthday when he wrote it. His mind was comparatively clear of its religious mania, and he was just about to begin the fifteen years of work that made him famous and established the great change in our imaginative literature. At the time of the letter Cowper was therefore in a calm, settled state, and his opinions were carefully considered. He says to his friend :

I am sorry to find that the censure I passed on Occiduus is even better founded than I supposed. Lady Austen has been to one of his sabbatical concerts, which, it seems, are composed of song-tunes and psalm-tunes indiscriminately; music without words—and I suppose one may say, consequently, without devotion.

Occiduus was a parson who entertained himself with music of a Sunday evening. The music was instrumental. As such it was, according to eighteenth century notions, secular. Secular things can be naught but evil when made use of on the sacred day. And music as a sheer luxury—that is, as something not employed either for religious purposes or as a help in rest and recreation—is definitely bad.

He [this parson] seems, together with others of our acquaintance, to have suffered considerably in his spiritual character by his attachment to music. The lawfulness of it, when used with moderation, and in its proper place, is unquestionable; but *I believe that wine itself, though a man be guilty of habitual intoxication, does not more debauch and befool the natural understanding, than music—always music, music in season and out of season—weakens and destroys the spiritual discernment.*

If it is not used with an unfeigned reference to the worship of God, and with a design to assist the soul in the performance of it, *which cannot be the case when it is the only occupation*, it degenerates into a sensual delight and becomes a most powerful advocate for the admission of other pleasures, grosser perhaps in degree, but in their kind the same.—*Ibid.*

These are the pronouncements of an artist in words, who has thought long and earnestly on the subject of which he speaks. (The italics are, of course, not Cowper's.) And they are the opinions of a man who in his own way loves the thing he condemns, when that thing is used in what he considers the right way. They are therefore deliverances *ex cathedra*.

In his poetry Cowper dealt further with the present case.

Occiduous is a pastor of renown:
When he has prayed and preached the sabbath down,
With wire and catgut he concludes the day,
Quavering and semiquavering care away.
The full concerto swells upon your ear;
All elbows shake. Look in, and you would swear
The Babylonian tyrant with a nod
Had summoned them to serve his golden god:
So well that thought th' employment seems to suit
Psalttery and sackbut, dulcimer, and flute.
'Oh fie! 'tis evangelical and pure!
Observe each face, how sober and demure!
Ecstasy sets her stamp on every mien;
Chins fallen, and not an eyeball to be seen.'
Still I insist, though music heretofore
Has charmed me much (not e'en Occiduous more)
Love, joy, and peace make harmony more meet
For Sabbath evenings, and perhaps as sweet.

Progress of Error, 124-141.

The offender being a minister of the Gospel makes the matter infinitely worse.

Will not the sickliest sheep of every flock
Resort to this example as a rock;
There stand, and justify the foul abuse
Of sabbath hours with plausible excuse?
If apostolic gravity be free
To play the fool on Sundays, why not we?
If he the tinkling harpsichord regards
As inoffensive, what offence in cards?
Strike up the fiddles, let us all be gay!
Laymen have leave to dance, if parsons play.
Oh Italy!—thy sabbaths will be soon
Our sabbaths, closed with mummery and buffoon. . . .

Ibid., 142-153.

Thus music is an early stage in the general 'progress of error'; and whenever Cowper sets out to give a catalogue of sins or dangerous indulgences, he invariably brings it in, as:

Renounce the world, the preacher cries.
We do, a multitude replies.
While one as innocent regards
A snug and friendly game of cards;
And one, whatever you may say,
Can see no evil in a play;
Some love a concert, or a race,
And others, shooting, and the chase.

Love of the World Reproved, 25-32.

Cowper did not understand that for the musician of imaginative religious cast, an oratorio like the 'Messiah' is a kind of stupendous

hymn. And he could not realise this, because he lacked the simple objective vision by means of which the musician effects his presentation of lofty, noble, or sublime themes, whether religious in the doctrinal sense or not. He was not, in Sir Thomas Browne's famous passage, 'harmonically composed,' and so could not take delight in that kind of 'harmony' which constitutes music in its largest forms—any more than he could find pleasure in that 'vulgar and tavern music, which makes one man merry, another mad,' but which (says Sir Thomas) 'strikes in me a deep fit of devotion and a profound contemplation of my Maker'; since it is 'an hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world and creatures of God,' and 'a sensible fit of that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ears of God.' Loving music in a simple degree, Cowper praises Handel, calling him 'the more than Homer of his age.' But as Ruskin blames Mozart for 'Don Giovanni,' so, misunderstanding the matter, does Cowper blame Handel for such works as this oratorio. And still more does he blame the people who go to the oratorio, for their empty, thoughtless, worldly, self-indulgent pursuit of mere pleasure. In that he is justified.

For Protestant Germany the problem of devotional music was solved by Luther. Bach was the eventual result of his actions; and not only does Bach stand to German music much as Shakespeare stands to English literature, but all later German music, even Wagner's, derives either from him or from the fundamental origin from which he himself derived. For pre-Puritan England the problem was solved in a way that led to William Byrd and his predecessors and contemporaries, who (along with the members of the Palestrina school of Italy) represent the later mediæval religious emotion much as Dante represents the earlier mediæval religious thought.

Devotional music languished in England from the time Puritanism became a power, and all other music inevitably languished with it. But Puritanism was comparatively a minor cause of the decay of our musicianship; and if those other causes had never existed, Puritanism, even when as austere as Cowper's, would have helped and strengthened our music, by creating for it a noble audience, and by filling it with emotions of the loftiest kind.

Music is sound. Sound is a blessing or a curse, according as it is ordered into art or abandoned to meaningless noise. Cowper understood this fully:

Even the ears that are deaf to the Gospel are continually entertained, though without knowing it, by sounds for which they are solely indebted to its author. There is somewhere in infinite space a world that does not roll within the precincts of mercy, and as it

is reasonable, and even scriptural, to suppose that there is music in heaven, in those dismal regions perhaps the reverse of it is found; tones so dismal as to make woe itself more insupportable, and to acuminate even despair.

To John Newton, September 18, 1784.

The musician could not imagine a more terrible hell than is suggested in these words.

The genial Cowper, however, is the man we admire and cherish in these times—the lover of music in quiet domestic circles, and the lover of the simple sounds of nature. And after thinking of his spiritual troubles and considering how they ruined him for some of the grander things of life, we find it pleasant and helpful to turn to the charming little records of his hours of contentment: to this, for example, from the letters,

If you have Donne's Poems bring them with you, for I have not seen them many years, and should like to look them over. You may treat us too, if you please, with a little of your music, for I seldom hear any, and delight much in it. You need not fear a rival, for we have but two fiddles in the neighbourhood—one a gardener's, the other a tailor's; terrible performers both!

To John Johnson, July 31, 1790.

and to this, from the poem (*The Task*, iv, 160) which first lifted eighteenth century English literature out of the cool intellectual levels of the Augustan age. The pleasant occupations of a family gathering in the evening are being described. The ladies are busy with their needlework. One present—Cowper, probably—reads aloud; and then another—Lady Austen, or Catharina—sings a song. The harpsichord is the lyre. . . .

The poet's or historian's page, by one
Made vocal for the amusement of the rest;
The sprightly lyre, whose treasure of sweet sounds
The touch from many a trembling chord shakes out,
And the clear voice, symphonious, yet distinct,
And in the charming strife triumphant still.

SYDNEY GREW.

EVA MARY GREW.

PAUL HINDEMITH AND THE NEO-CLASSIC MUSIC

THE musical public in England is becoming increasingly aware that Paul Hindemith is a composer of prominence; but, with characteristic caution, this public is not yet disposed to treat him as one of importance. Yet Hindemith is important, not so much, perhaps, for what he is writing as for what he represents. He stands in particular for the modern trend of music, and for the modern spirit of writing music. Nowadays it is necessary to distinguish between the two. To call them the time 'of' the composition and the time 'in' the composition is to deal with two thirds only of the question: let us call the third function the time 'for' the composition.⁽¹⁾

Just how important these questions are for the modern composer has been shown by Stravinsky; and it has been pitiable to see how the ardour of his admirers has diminished in quantity, if not in quality, after each successive attempt of this musician to cater for the changing needs of the public. No public has continuously appreciated his benevolent foresight, except the Parisians, and they have generally admired him for his non-musical qualities. There are not a few sage folk who make a deprecating cough or a belittling sniff whenever Stravinsky is mentioned, and then proceed to discuss Meyerbeer. And yet these very people may well be applauding Holst's 'Fugal Concerto' and Walton's 'Sinfonia Concertante,' or Prokofieff's 'Classical' symphony and a Hindemith 'Concerto Grosso'; appreciating them, be it noted, for their 'neo-classic style' and their 'linear counterpoint,' apart from their individual characteristics. This 'neo-classic' style has been Stravinsky's ever since 'Les Noces.' Yet the curious fact remains that his works are regarded as a series of experiments, whereas Hindemith's are treated as a single statement of contemporary expression, and an inevitable genus of statement too. The explanation is probably that Hindemith has combined more successfully, and with less apparent effort and discrepancy, the time 'in' and the time 'for' the composition. Unlike Stravinsky, Hindemith has not had to coerce or blandish a

(1) The time 'of' the composition is the date. The time 'in' the composition is more complex, but we may here be content to call it the 'Expressive Quality of the Zeitgeist'—if so vague a term be permissible. For a very exhaustive treatment of the subject, readers are referred to Miss Stein's *Composition as Explanation*, and *The Making of Americans*; and to the critical works of Wyndham Lewis.

public into following his lead. His music contains elements which are popular, and also contemporary in the sense of style, technique, and expression. A large following in Germany has found Hindemith's work so acceptable that it has appointed him leader of modern German music, and it does not hesitate on occasion to tell the composer what it expects him to do. No public has ever dictated to Stravinsky.

Hindemith has thus had considerable encouragement to write his particular kind of music. At the present time he seems to be in two minds. He wishes to continue being a powerful vehicle of contemporary expression; but he is young and impetuous enough to have one or two bees in his musical bonnet. These are known variously as *Gebrauchsmusik*, *Gemeinschaftsmusik*, *Lehrstückmusik*, *Filmmusik*, *Musik für Radio*, and so on. These troublesome bees make much ado, but they have little sting in them. A more important contribution to modern composition is Hindemith's *Kammermusik*, written in the neo-classic style. It is necessary to enquire how Hindemith came to write in this style, and why, in Germany at least, this style should be popular: for it cannot be denied that during the past twenty years the musical public has found most contemporary idioms very difficult to appreciate, and indeed has deemed them hardly worth while to examine in order to appreciate them.

The problem of relating contemporary composition with the understanding of contemporary audiences has become increasingly urgent for all to solve. The most acute period of disparity is probably now past. There are signs of a coming reconciliation between composers and public, and such a reconciliation has been due largely to Hindemith and the modern German school. Hindemith has himself deplored 'the loose relation maintained by music between the producer and the consumer': further, he has declared that a composer 'should never write unless he is acquainted with the demand for his work.' The mutual understanding between composer and consumer that is to-day reappearing is practically synonymous with the cult of neo-classicism. It may be well to sketch briefly its origin and development.

A return to a form of classicism was inevitable when music began to exaggerate romanticism during the post-Wagnerian period. The tone poems of Richard Strauss illustrate the growth of excessive complexity. The development of the Wagnerian leitmotif rapidly extended to a complication of the whole of the musical texture. Soon the harmony became throughout thematic in character, and in order to distinguish between his numerous themes Strauss resorted to bitonality and tritonality—different themes played in different tonalities simultaneously. Schönberg was pursuing a roughly parallel

course of aggrandisement, his scores growing ever larger, more complex, intricate, labyrinthine and unwieldy. But Schönberg avoided the use of conflicting tonalities and instead developed chromaticism. Finally his music became keyless, to all intents and purposes. Polychromaticism was the complement of polytonality. Stravinsky developed the possibilities of combined tonalities in 'Le Sacre,' though the importance of this work lies in its wealth of rhythmic devices in addition to its block harmonies and brilliant, massive orchestration. When we compare 'Ein Heldenleben' and 'Le Sacre du Printemps' with 'Die Gurrelieder' and 'Pelleas und Melisande,' we can understand that music had proceeded as far as reasonably possible along horizontal and vertical lines.

Both Stravinsky and Schönberg reacted in favour of simplicity immediately after writing 'Le Sacre' and 'Pierrot Lunaire' respectively. In 1914, Stravinsky started work on the choral writing of 'Les Noces.' The same year saw the completion of Schönberg's 'Vier Orchesterlieder,' the last work before the extremely economical 'Fünf Klavierstücke' of 1920-3. Schönberg has become increasingly concise, logical and sparing of decoration, perfecting a system by which each note is set down for a definite purpose; for an intellectual reason as opposed to emotional impulse. Between 1915 and 1929 he wrote nothing for full orchestra, and his two recent attempts—'Heute auf Morgen' (1929) and the 'Begleitmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene' (1930)—employ the orchestra very sparingly. Stravinsky likewise abandoned writing for full orchestra between 1914 and 1929, and composed exclusively for chamber music combinations. One of the hallmarks of neo-classicism is its use of the chamber orchestra.

Neo-classic music is more varied in harmony than in form; but there is a certain underlying direction of harmony which insists upon a horizontal movement, and which prefers free counterpoint to individual strands of melody with accompaniment. The extent of this contrapuntal freedom marks the difference between classic and neo-classic music. Further, the many and varied harmonic innovations introduced into music from Debussy onwards are gradually being assimilated. They are now past their first aggressive stage and are becoming accepted as consonances or points of rest. In neo-classic music we find yesterday's 'revolutionary' dissonances used to-day as 'normal' means of expression, and placed side by side with 'accepted' classical harmonic progressions. One of the prime difficulties in understanding neo-classic music is the recognition of the establishment of this equal relationship. The 'new music' is in the act of becoming classical.

It is far easier to understand block harmonies moving in different

directions than several single thematic strands which, when heard together, give an impression of keylessness, or at least of considerable confusion. Toch's 'Piano Concerto,' or Bartók's, for example, sound more dissonant and confused than 'Le Sacre du Printemps' or Holst's 'Neptune'; whereas the former are harmonically less complex. Similarly, much of Hindemith's music seems very difficult to comprehend as it rushes past us. A 'Concerto Grosso' of Hindemith, or Falla's 'Harpsichord Concerto,' tax our understanding and seem more dissonant than Prokofiev's 'Pas d'Acier' or Honegger's 'Tempête': yet in the former much less is happening, as far as quantity of the notes is concerned, though the music may after a while tell us more because Hindemith may have more to say than Honegger. A vertical texture is more solid and tangible, more readily apprehensible, than a horizontal texture.

Neo-classic music is pre-eminently horizontal. One of its most arresting features is its 'linear counterpoint.' There are two kinds of 'linear' counterpoint. In the one, the different strands of the musical texture have no necessary relation to each other; they may proceed entirely independently, without any vertical considerations. 'Pierrot Lunaire' is an example, and, an extreme instance, Arthur Lourié's 'Forms in the Air.' In the other kind, the linear counterpoint does have reference to what is happening vertically. But the counterpoint of Hindemith and Toch is very different from Bach's: it is 'free'; or, if we call Bach's counterpoint free, then Hindemith's is considerably freer. And at once a cry is raised: 'If it is "free," if there are no rules, then anyone can write double fugues by the yard without reference to the sound.' Anyone can if they are in so unfortunate a position as to have nothing better to do. Hindemith's counterpoint will sound chaotic if we think of counterpoint exclusively in terms of the eighteenth and early seventeenth centuries. But since the horizontal texture of neo-classic music consists of the block harmonies of Stravinsky's 'Le Sacre' and of Debussy's fifths, fourths, and whole-tones *made linear*, and since Debussy and 'Le Sacre' have been accepted and analysed and 'resolved,' it follows that this linear counterpoint will one day be accepted in the same way. The present-day horizontal texture is in reality no more complicated and unanalysable than yesterday's verticalism. It is evolutionary, with a tendency towards simplicity, not revolutionary. If the ear has accepted the vertical harmonic clashes of ten and fifteen years ago it will surely acclimatise itself to the linear dissonance of Hindemith.

Another cry, the parrot cry that modern music is moving 'Back to Bach,' is extremely misleading since it fastens undue attention

upon the simplicity of purely formal aspects instead of insisting upon fundamental differences of harmony and counterpoint. Viewed externally, neo-classic music has more affinities with Bach than Wagner; but in so far as the content is concerned, Handel would have no more thought of writing like Hindemith than would Mendelssohn or Stanford.

The form of neo-classicism is classical in the sense that it reverts from the expansive, 'illustrative' tone poem and fantasia to the compact, 'abstract' suite movement—prelude, gavotte, minuet, gigue, sarabande, fugue—and to the early classical *concerto grosso*. But it should be noted that if the classical sonata form of the latter eighteenth century is used, it is extremely rare to find any classical system of key-relationships embodied in it. Schönberg is nothing less than pedantic in his use of exposition (*a* and *b*), bridge passage, development, recapitulation, and so on, but his music remains strenuously polychromatic. Stravinsky adopts quite another method in his later compositions, favouring the rondo form, but radiating from a single key, as in his 'Capriccio.' His 'Symphony of Psalms' consists of a prelude, a double fugue, and an *allegro symphonique*, so far as the form is concerned; but the procedure with reference to key-sense does not follow classical precedent. Like Schönberg and Stravinsky, Hindemith is entirely opposed to contrasts of key, and he has been called an 'atonal' composer. Such a label, however, may well be misleading. He is certainly not 'atonal' like Schönberg. A misunderstanding has arisen probably on account of his using diatonic scales but rarely, thus giving an impression of vague or no tonality. This point will be dealt with below.

Hindemith and most of the modern German school favour the form of the early classical *concerto grosso*; three short movements, written for solo instrument(s) with a chamber orchestra in attendance. Where a small chamber orchestra is used, as in some of Hindemith's *Kammermusik*, it is customary to treat each instrument as a solo instrument; and even where a full orchestra is used, as in operatic works, there is a growing tendency to divide it into its component parts of strings, wind, and brass, and to keep them separate.

Some idea of the beginning and extent of neo-classicism may be gained from the following names and dates. Hindemith's first published work appeared in 1917. By 1923 the neo-classic trend of music was firmly established. Schönberg had written his 'Fünf Klavierstücke,' the 'Serenade-Septet,' the 'Dance Suite for Piano,' and was at work on the 'Wind Quintet.' Stravinsky had scored 'Pulcinella,' and had written the 'wind' symphonies, the 'Concertino,' 'Mavra,' 'L'Histoire du Soldat' (a landmark in

neo-classic history), the 'Octet,' and 'Noces,' and was in the middle of the 'Piano Concerto.' Casella adopted neo-classicism definitely in 1923 with his 'Concerto for String Quartet'; in 1924 he began writing his brilliant 'Partita for Piano and Orchestra.' In Germany Krenek had written his 'Third String Quartet' and part of the 'Piano Concerto,' which was followed by the 'Violin Concerto' and the 'Concerto Grosso No. 1' (1925). To the same year belong Toch's 'Five Pieces for Chamber Orchestra,' which show his firm adherence to neo-classic principles. By 1922 Hindemith had eliminated almost all traces of Richard Strauss and Wagner. His second period begins in 1922 with the 'Third String Quartet' (opus 22), followed by 'Die Junge Magd' (opus 23), and the *Kammermusik No. 1* (1922-3).

Hindemith appeared before the German public at an opportune moment. Prior to his advent, German music seemed undecided as to the course it should follow. Since the deaths of Wagner and Brahms, German composers seemed over-anxious to perpetuate the principles of their glorious heritage. Most of them failed to realise that these principles were intimately connected with the romantic era; and that the great German composers had brought romanticism to a magnificent close by the end of the last century. The post-romantics and the post-Wagnerians were writing a collective epilogue instead of individual chapters. Their work came as an anticlimax. There remain to-day a diminishing group who still write in the romantic tradition; of these the most noteworthy, perhaps, is Schreker. They find themselves almost out of touch with modern German thought. For German music broke away from Wagner and Brahms to follow the later Reger, Schönberg and Busoni. Germany has been influenced as much as Austria by Schönberg's teaching. At the moment Reger's influence is more evident since it is working through Hindemith who leads the modern German school. But we should not be surprised if Germany as a whole were to forsake neo-classicism and return to a form of romanticism: for we find it difficult to regard the romanticism of the nineteenth century as a passing movement as far as German music is concerned. The German conception of music as a form of philosophy seems to be bound up with the idea of romanticism, and romanticism with the 'soul-expression' of the individual. To the German, music is superhuman and symbolic, antipathetic to things matter of fact, idealistic. And thus it is that to-day we find a section of the German public demanding that Hindemith shall state the 'mission' of his art. Hindemith's ideas about music as an art are diametrically opposed to the traditional German view. He is the mouthpiece of those Germans who realise the necessity of freeing themselves from the shackles of outworn

romanticism, even if by so doing they may eventually return to romanticism, though with a fresh interpretation of it. Hindemith insists that his music is human, not superhuman; utilitarian, not romantic; purposeful, not idealistic. His music is self-contained and absolute: it eschews description, programmes, expressionism, philosophy and (of course) sentimentalism. It does not express an individual's thoughts and emotions, and then expect an audience to react to it and interpret it accordingly; it sets out to be accessible to everyone alike. There is no mystery about it.

These are Hindemith's expressed ideas. Many of them are sound only theoretically, and not very sound even so. But we sometimes feel he has composed just like any other composer, adding the thoughts about the music afterwards. However that may be, he is undoubtedly a resourceful writer. We cannot imagine him having stacks of symphonies and operas stored away on shelves without hope of performance. All his works are performed because they are meant to be. He writes a string quartet for a definite group of players, a viola concerto for himself, a 'cello sonata for a friend, music for brass band dedicated to Scherchen, music for school children, music for his family circle, for broadcasting, for films, for gramophones, for *Liebhaber und Musikfreunde*, and so on.

Hindemith is a prolific composer. Between 1917 and 1930 his compositions amount to well over fifty, many of them consisting of groups of works. It is but natural to find very inferior stuff existing cheek by jowl with fine music. His experimental work—his *Lehrstücke* and *Gemeinschaftsmusik*—is perhaps intended to appeal only to a certain type of mind, and even so only ephemerally. Hindemith's experimental work originates in his conception of music as being 'gebrauchs-', utilitarian. At first, this notion of usefulness seemed to be associated with economics. The reaction from post-Wagnerian lavishness coincided with the necessity for economy during the war and post-war periods (e.g., Stravinsky's 'L'Histoire du Soldat'). The reappearance of the chamber orchestra was not simply a matter of taste nor of chance. Soon, however, the usefulness of music ceased to apply to its means; it applied to its end, which, according to Hindemith, is its capacity for satisfying the market. We thus find Hindemith's latest music serving a purpose in so far as the public is capable of making use of it. *Gemeinschaftsmusik* ('community music') is a new craze, which has been rapidly succeeded by another, *Lehrstückmusik* ('instructive music'). *Gemeinschaftsmusik*, of which one of the best examples is Weill's 'Der Jasager,' an opera for school children, aims at providing music for private performance by groups of amateurs. As for the

Lehrstück, the first attempt of members of the audience helping to make music 'instructive' was a ludicrous failure. After Baden-Baden, the *Lehrstück* has been tried more successfully at Dresden and Mainz. It is, however, undergoing transformation, and in Toch's 'The Water,' it appears as a form of dramatic cantata. Much of this sort of music was heard at the Festival of 'Neue Musik 1930' at Berlin last August. A special feature was made of music for gramophone and radio. Toch's 'Spoken Music' and 'Geographical Fugue' were two of the most successful experiments, making full use of extraordinary effects, happily peculiar to phonographic technic. Hindemith's contributions were shockingly vulgar, his radio music in particular being nothing less than loathsome.

Such excesses are worth noting, for the music heard during the 1930 Festival is very representative of modern German music; and it has to be accounted for even when it is extremely bad. The 'Neue Musik' does show evidence of the spirit of enquiry that is active in modern Germany. There seems to be nothing settled about it, except that it is as dissatisfied with itself as with the example and precept of the German Classics. Its protagonists—Hindemith, Weill, Toch, Krenek, and others—display exuberant energy which is never tired of exploring any and every avenue to find what exists at the end of it. Perhaps they give up exploring before they have proceeded half way. But the fact remains that they do explore. They make experiments, admittedly, not one quarter of which are fruitful of good work. But had they not made the attempt, could they have known the experiments would prove abortive? We in England are too prone to deride experiment for the sake of experiment. 'All that' should be nipped in the bud. We like our young composers to settle down as soon as possible. But is there not ample room in our home-grown repertoires for more *Façades* and more *Conversations*? both works incomparably better, musically and humorously, than all the 'amusing' experiments of modern Germany. Our musical food, like our cookery, seems depressingly plain at times. An exotic *bombe glacée* may not be wholesome, but it is appetising, and at least it serves to emphasise by contrast the good, solid qualities of more ordinary fare.

In considering Hindemith's music it is advisable to separate as far as possible his experiments from his more serious work. We have now to deal with the latter in some detail. We have said that Hindemith's first published work dates from 1917. Since we are considering his work in relation to the neo-classic style, we may omit discussion of his first period up to the 'Third String Quartet' of 1922. We see in this work unmistakable traces of Schönberg. Just as Schönberg returned to strict classic forms to give a fixed frame-

work to his nebulous polychromaticism, so did Hindemith seek order by going back to eighteenth century formalism. The song-cycle, 'Die Junge Magd,' is astonishingly restrained. The opening of the first song is quoted below (Ex. 1). 'Die Junge Magd' consists of six songs for alto, with flute, clarinet and string quartet. The cycle ends thus (Ex. 2).

Ex. 1. In ruhiger Bewegung

Gesang

Orch.

Gesang

Orch.

Gesang

Orch.

Oft am Brun-nen wenn es däm-mert, sieht man Sie ver-gan-gen-heit als -ten die

Ex. 2

Orch.

ganz ruhige Viertel

Ende

Hindemith then wrote his first *Kammermusik*, opus 24, a landmark in his busy career. The *Kammermusik No. 1* consists of (i) a Concerto Grosso, (ii) a Wind Quintet; and Three Sonatas (opus 25) for (i) Viola Solo, (ii) Viola d'Amore and Pianoforte, (iii) 'Cello Solo. The opening of the 'Sonata for Viola d'Amore' is given in Ex. 3.

Kammermusik Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5 (opus 36) were written between 1924 and 1927, and consist of Four Concertos, respectively for Pianoforte, Violoncello, Violin, and Viola, each with Chamber Orchestra. *Kammermusik No. 6* (opus 46, i) is a Concerto for Viola d'Amore, and *Kammermusik No. 7* (opus 46, ii) is a Concerto for Organ. These seven sets of chamber music are perhaps the best, as they are the most representative work that Hindemith has yet written. They make a fine contribution to music in general and to neo-classic music in particular.

The following example is typical of Hindemith's vigorous polyphonic writing which he employs with great virtuosity in all his chamber music (Ex. 3).

The quotation (Ex. 4) is from the overture to 'Neues vom Tage,' the 'lustige' opera which was finished in 1928.

This is a fair sample of Hindemith's work. His music is often directed to be played 'schnell' and 'lustig.' The speed at which the music moves tends to make it sound more confusing than it actually is, though it is just this speed which binds it together into an organised whole. The music proceeds with an almost machine-like regularity and insistence, to the point, and businesslike, and always highly efficient. There are very few indications of *rubato* or *rallentando*, of long *crescendos* and gradual *diminuendos*. Hindemith avoids musical italics. He has been adversely criticised for being monotonous. The absence of musical 'expression' is not a grave charge, and Hindemith avoids it on principle, just as Stravinsky did in the 'Wind' symphonies and the octet. A more serious charge against Hindemith is his inability to write lyrically. He is at his most feeble in his slow movements where the impetus of the music is necessarily absent. Yet Hindemith has written one slow movement—that of the 'Organ Concerto'—which suggests that he is capable of writing sustained music of a high standard. Generally speaking, his music moves with great rapidity. It is said to be 'atonal.' In reality it is tonal, but the tonalities change so frequently, and often in unorthodox ways, that the music is felt to be keyless.

Hindemith employs three methods to disguise his tonality. The first is the simultaneous use of major and minor. By reducing Ex. 4 to very simple terms, it is possible to show that its

Ex. 2. *Mässig Schnell. Lustig*

Viola
d'Amore

Klavier

The musical score is written for Viola d'Amore and Klavier. It consists of seven systems of two staves each. The top staff is for Viola d'Amore and the bottom staff is for Klavier. The music is in 2/4 time and features a lively, rhythmic melody in the Viola part and a supporting accompaniment in the Klavier part. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score ends with a double bar line and the word 'etc.' in the Klavier part.

Sehr frisch und knapp (♩ = 92-100)
Schnell.

Ex. 4

Orch.

The musical score is written for orchestra. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Sehr frisch und knapp (♩ = 92-100)' and 'Schnell.'. The score consists of eight systems of staves. The first system is marked 'Ex. 4' and 'Orch.'. The music is in 4/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns, including many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The score ends with a 'dc' (da capo) marking.

foundation is diatonic in principle and that its harmony proceeds in an orthodox fashion (Ex. 5).



A second characteristic of Hindemith's writing is his use of non-European scales. His scale may begin in a major-diatonic manner and finish in the minor, but the scale has been taken as a unit (Ex. 6a), or his scale may be the two whole-tone scales, or parts of them, fused into one (Ex. 6b), or again it may be no recognisable European scale (Ex. 6c).



The point to notice is that thematic material based on such scales sounds confusing at first, and the texture may be misrepresented as

'atonal.' The following (Ex. 7), from the overture to 'Cardillac,' illustrates Hindemith's use of unusual scales.

Ex. 7 *Nicht zu Schnelle Viertel, Mit sehr viel Kraft.*

Orch.

A third characteristic is Hindemith's chromaticism, of which there is evidence in the second quotation above from 'Die Junge Magd.' It might be thought that this was an approach to the 'atonal' standpoint: but if we take Schönberg's 'Suite für Klavier' as typical of 'atonal' music, as we may, we cannot call Hindemith an exponent of atonality. The two composers employ different means to different ends. In Schönberg's atonality it is difficult to point to any phrase, having regard to its accompaniment also, and say: 'That is in E major.' Hindemith's sense of tonality may be fleeting, but he is some distance from the point of no-tonality. He is no more atonal than Busoni, and scarcely more so than Reger by whom he has been considerably influenced.

A final example will serve to show what happens when Hindemith uses all three characteristics to disguise his tonality. This

Ex. 8. Ruhig bewegte Viertel. Sehr grazios.

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each with three staves. The first staff of each system is for the 1st Flute, the second for the 2nd Flute, and the third for the Orchestra (Orch.). The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo/mood is indicated as 'Ruhig bewegte Viertel. Sehr grazios.' The score begins with a piano (p) dynamic. The first system shows the 1st Flute playing a melodic line with slurs, while the 2nd Flute and Orchestra provide harmonic support. The second system continues the melodic development in the 1st Flute. The third system introduces a mezzo-forte (mp) dynamic. The fourth system concludes with 'etc.' in both the 1st and 2nd Flute parts, indicating a repeat or continuation of the pattern.

is taken from the 'Duet for Two Flutes' ('Pantomime') in 'Cardillac' (Ex. 8).

It would be rash, if indeed it were possible, to sum up Hindemith's achievement, for he is essentially a composer in the making. He is an intensely vigorous person. At the age of thirty-five he has written a prodigious amount of music, and of the most varied description. He has been leader of an orchestra; he founded the Amar-Hindemith String Quartet; he was instrumental in organising the Donaueschingen (Baden-Baden) Festivals; he is an active professor, critic, and propagandist of contemporary music. More noteworthy, he is a virtuoso viola player, performing his own exceedingly difficult works for this instrument with apparent ease.

As a composer he seems to be in an awkward and unsatisfactory position at present. He is the acknowledged leader of the New Music in Germany, and perhaps he has found it difficult to dissociate himself from the more extravagant and less musical manifestations of this movement. Many of his most ardent supporters hail him as the brilliant instigator of this or that craze, while others urge him to make his work less 'useful' and more (much more) 'soulful.' The result is that much of his music at present betrays a state of exasperating indecision.

In his sets of *Kammermusik* and in his string quartets, Hindemith has shown how capable he is of writing good and noteworthy music. With his vitality and his technical dexterity it is scarcely credible that he will continue to fritter away his talents. Perhaps it is necessary for him to experiment if only to convince himself of his real abilities in other directions. There is a place for experiment provided it does not encroach too much upon serious composition. If Hindemith allied himself more definitely with the main current of modern music it is probable that German composers would follow his lead and write music of greater permanent value than they are doing at the moment. Neo-classicism offers more scope than *Gemeinschaftsmusik*, and is surely a worthier subject for composers of proved ability. Fortunately, however, Hindemith's most recent works indicate that he is 'settling down.' The 'Konzertmusik für Bläser' (1930) is splendidly direct in manner—straightforward, vigorous, and to the point. And the 'Klavier Konzert' (1930-1) for pianoforte, brass, and two harps, is one of the finest works Hindemith has written. It maintains the high standard of the best of the *Kammermusik*. Hindemith is now engaged upon a choral work. His intention is to delete all superfluous notes, and to make his music concise, clear,

economical of means, direct in end—in a word, to make music 'serviceable.'

Paul Hindemith was born at Hanau in 1895. His works include:—

I. Opus 8 (1917), Three Pieces for 'Cello and Piano; opus 10 (1919), First String Quartet in F minor; opus 11 (1920-3), (a) Violin and Piano Sonata in E flat, (b) Violin and Piano Sonata in D, (c) 'Cello and Piano Sonata, (d) Viola and Piano Sonata, (e) Sonata for Viola; opus 12, Opera: 'Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen'; opus 16, Second String Quartet in C; opus 18, Eight Songs for Soprano with Piano; opus 19, *Tanzstücke* for Piano; opus 20 (1921), Opera: 'Das Nusch-Nuschi' (in One Act, for Marionettes); opus 21 (1922), Opera: 'Sancta Susanna' (in One Act).

II. Opus 22 (1922), Third String Quartet; opus 23b, 'Die Junge Magd'; opus 24, *Kammermusik* No. 1: (i) Concerto Grosso, (ii) Wind Quintet, for Flute, Clarinet, Oboe, Horn, Bassoon; opus 25, (i) Sonata for Viola Solo, (ii) Sonata for Viola d'Amore and Piano, (iii) Sonata for 'Cello Solo; opus 26, Piano Suite, '1922.'

III. Opus 27 (1924), Ballad Cycle, 'Das Marienbad,' 15 Songs for Soprano and Piano; opus 28, Dance Pantomime, 'Der Dämon'; opus 31, Two Sonatas, (a) Violin Solo, (b) Two Flutes in canon; opus 32 (1924), Fourth String Quartet; opus 33, *Liederbuch für Mehrere Stimmen*; opus 34 (1924), Trio for Violin, Viola and 'Cello; opus 35, 'Die Serenaden,' for Soprano, Oboe, Viola and 'Cello; opus 36 (1924-7), *Kammermusik*, Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5: Four Concerti for Piano, 'Cello, Violin, Viola; opus 37, Two Sets of Piano Music; opus 38 (1925), *Konzert* for Full Orchestra; opus 39 (1926), Opera: 'Cardillac'; opus 40, Toccata for Pianola and Suite for Mechanical Organ; opus 41 (1927), *Konzert-Musik* for Wind Instruments; opus 42, Suite for Mechanical Organ, for 'Felix the Cat' Film; opus 43, Instrumental and Choral Music; opus 44, *Schulwerk*, several sets of pieces; opus 45, *Sing- und Spielmusiken für Liebhaber und Musikfreunde*; opus 45a, Chamber Opera: 'Hin und Zurück'; opus 46, i, *Kammermusik* No. 6: Concerto for Viola d'Amore; opus 46, ii, *Kammermusik* No. 7: Concerto for Organ; opus 48 (1928), Opera: 'Neues vom Tage'; *Konzertmusik* for Brass Band (1930); Concerto for Piano, Brass, and Harps (1930-1).

ARTHUR G. BROWNE.

MODERN MUSIC : AN INDICTMENT

In this essay I propose to treat my subject from a general rather than from a technical standpoint, not merely because I have grave doubt of my competence in technics, but because I hold that modern music may be as far in advance in form from the old as a motor-car is from a chariot and yet be just as surely damned for all that.

The subject is indeed a wide one, for a consideration of the merits or demerits of modern music can only be artificially isolated from a consideration of the larger question of modern art, the problem of modern music being but a special case of the general problem. Contemporary literature, painting, sculpture, architecture and music—all these possess certain definite characteristics which sharply differentiate them from the art of the past, and even from that of the immediate past. These characteristics are vaguely, but conveniently, summed up in the adjective 'modern,' which has, in this connection, far more than a simple chronological meaning. We signify by it not merely an evolution from the past, not even, if we like to put it so, an emergent evolution, but a revolution—a radical difference not so much in degree as in kind. To this change there is no parallel in the past or, at any rate, no parallel in the past history of this cycle of civilisation. History has not so much repeated as defeated itself. Modern music, like modern art in general, is the expression of a new *Zeitgeist* which it symbolises.

To condemn the new is always to lay oneself open to the facile charge of *laudator temporis acti*. Yet, owing to the tuition of Dean Inge, even the general public is by now well aware that progress in time is not a natural law, and Sir Flinders Petrie has pointed out that civilisation is a recurrent phenomenon exhibiting cycles of rise and decay, and with that rise and decay wax and wane the arts each in a definite order. And this Spengler has also shown with German length and thoroughness. There are times, therefore, when the *laudator temporis acti* is the wise man and the enthusiast for the new the foolish one.

The question is open. On the one hand, our present civilisation may now be approaching its dotage and its art be a pathological sign of its decay, or we may be on the verge of some new and vital expression of its maturity. It is very easy to mistake the one for

the other, and such mistakes have been made before. Time is the President of the Court of Appeal, and all we can do is to take notice of the facts upon which he will have to base his judgment and indulge in a little prophecy. Rather futile, perhaps, for 'prophecy is only an amusement.' But it is an amusement of almost universal appeal.

Now I believe that the manifestations of modern music are not the normal signs of health but the pathological stigmata of disease. Its pains are not the pains of growth but the pangs of dissolution. It is, for the most part, restless, fretful, where it is not grim and unfriendly. It makes but scant concession to those canons of beauty to which the ear has been accustomed by the older masters. Its purgation of the emotions is cruelly drastic and leaves us not so much cleansed as exhausted. Its tragedy is a mere expression of despair or degenerates into an obscene goat song. Its comedy is cynical, heartless and unforgiving. Its thought is in a prison from which it can in no wise come out because its wealth is insufficient for the provision of the uttermost farthing. Thin worm-like phrases, neither alive nor dead, wriggle their way through its symphonies and sonatas. For inspiration, we have exhalation, for invention innovation, for originality a routine unexpectedness so expected that it fails either to surprise or charm.

Rarely in a modern work are we allowed to see beauty face to face. The contemporary musician seems ashamed of beauty or, perhaps, his reminiscence of that form is defective. You seldom, if ever, 'hear the angels sing' in any work of a modern. Beauty in fleeting glimpses there may be, but she is always 'slipping round the corner,' never in full satisfying view. That phrase of Priestley's seems to me exactly to describe the experience of a listener in his search for loveliness in a 'modern' composition. Amid a crowd of staggering sounds blindly reeling down the paths of air he, on a sudden, detects some haunting, lovely phrase. Immediately it vanishes from his ken, as though rounding a near-by corner, and is gone. Beauty, rashly intruding among the satyr rout, takes swift alarm and puts between her and them the nearest angle.

Sincerity of a sort, there is, but sincerity like patriotism, is not enough. It is too stern a virtue to endure unsupported. If the artist believe that the universe is unfriendly and unbeautiful he must, of course, express that view in his work. But it is a 'bitter doctrine,' and he might well take a hint from that Roman poet who also felt himself compelled to preach a 'bitter doctrine' but did not on that account neglect to decorate the cup into which he poured it.

For the profound change which has overtaken modern music and modern art we must seek a profound cause. Some of the objectional

features in contemporary music and art need no very elaborate examination. There is among many moderns a loss of the historic sense, even, in some degree a hatred of it. The cynical modern is only concerned with the past to see that it is decently buried and out of sight. He takes a peculiar pleasure in imagining that he lives upon an island of Time prepared especially for his own use, and if it be pointed out to him that he is thereby marooned, he is in no whit discomposed. The appeal of the past is to him merely the appeal of 'those dead bodies Time hath piled up at the gates of Death' and he will have none of it. He studiously ignores in his work anything that can in the least remind his public of his debt to the past, and on his unlikeness to that past he bases his claim to originality. He is nervously afraid lest anything he does should bear the remotest resemblance to anything that has been done and is consciously on the look-out to guard against it.

But it is not with these insincere exponents of the new that we are here concerned. The best of the modern composers are as sincere, as free from ignoble motives as the masters of the past. We must probe deeper to account for the disastrous change which, as I believe, has befallen modern music along with modern art in general.

Carlyle was once told of an American lady who boasted that she 'accepted the universe.' 'She'd better!' was his grim reply. Well, in former times, the creative artist did not accept the universe. He was under no compulsion to do so, and he would not have held himself to be a creative artist had he done so. And there, I believe, you have the root difference between modern art, including modern music, and the art of fresher times.

Though there have been sceptics in all ages, yet, generally speaking, the best thought of the past has held that there were two universes, the one relating to things seen which were temporal, and the other to things not seen which were eternal. From the first Plato sought to escape by means of his changeless eternal Forms, Paul by the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the artist by the might of his mind which enabled him to remould this 'sorry scheme of things' nearer his heart's desire. Art was then the response to life's cry for a means of escape into a larger reality than reality. But with the almost universal loss of faith in the second universe men, both artists and others, have 'accepted' this present one as all in all. There is nothing else into which they *can* escape. As Mr. Bertrand Russell, in accepting the universe, builds his philosophy upon the 'firm foundation of unyielding despair' and seems to enjoy himself

mightily in the process, so your modern musician builds upon the same foundation with gusto.

If this analysis be right, an explanation is afforded of many of the more irritating peculiarities of modern music, its restlessness, its abruptness, its bitter philosophy and its atomic structure. The musician is, perhaps, more than any other artist the child of his age because of his keener sensibility to its emotional reactions. The great disaster which has befallen modern civilisation is the dragging of the anchor of faith due, in the main, to the stark teachings of modern science, and especially of modern astronomy, which appear to show a wandering universe, devoid of purpose, staggering blindly to an inevitable and final dissolution. There is little beauty and no friendliness in this scheme of things, and in 'accepting' this universe modern man has lost his serenity, his belief in beauty and his belief in a power 'from end to end sweetly and smoothly ordering all things.' But it is a resentful acceptance and, underlying the restlessness and ruggedness of modern music, there is a bitter and unresolved conflict shown in the violent contrasts, the hanging discords and the careful avoidance of melody. Thrown back upon himself, and out of touch with the eternal, the musician is no longer inspired in the old sense but merely exhales the products of his own combustion. And this is fatal, for artists in all ages have known well that Archimides was wrong when he said 'I have found!' They know, or did know, that the intuitional flash comes from something outside a man and that the correct mood to employ is the passive 'I have been found!' And until a new form of faith comes to replace the old, until our artists again become 'God-drunken' men, each after his own fashion, no satisfying artistic synthesis will be possible.

The difference between the musical thought of past and present is perhaps best shown in that most intimate of all forms of music—chamber music. A quintet, quartet, trio or what-not in the wordless language of music is most likely to express the personal convictions of the composer. I do not know with what in modern music to compare the joyousness and beauty of some of Haydn's or Mozart's quartets, so I will choose a sterner example. In a Beethoven quartet we are taken through deep waters indeed. Here is strife, here is tragedy. There is no easy philosophy of reality: we are brought face to face with the grimmest problems and nothing is shirked. But at the end of the long corridor of pain there is always an open door through which escape is possible. We are in the presence of a Greatheart, and at the last can hear the trumpets sounding for him on the other side.

We rise with the feeling that the riddle of the universe has an answer, that we have heard it and can hear it again.

But how different is the effect of a modern piece of chamber music! There is strength indeed, but out of the strong comes sweetness never. The anguished appeal is a cry from the Pit. In one of May Sinclair's books there is a terrible story of a locked door. Behind that door two people had been used to meet on earth to sin together and, after dissolution, their spirits revolve for ever around the orbit of an evil memory. At first they had struggled apart and turned about in wide circles seeking some avenue of salvation, but ever the circles narrowed until at last they contracted to a centre point behind the locked door of the room of shame. Imprisoned at that centre those unhappy people repeat their foul experience for eternity. And so it is with the tortured thought of a modern musical composition. Its tragedy is the tragedy of the locked door. Haunted by a dreadful memory, it is self-imprisoned. You can hear it pattering along the strings seeking a way out from the locked room. And you can hear it pattering back again from its fruitless search. Then the music gyrates giddily, but with an ever lessening radius, until it ceases, not because it is 'quieted by hope,' but because further struggle is obviously futile. The end is where the beginning was: in the locked room.

Thank God for the old Masters! Their minds were so rich that we can afford to apply Lamb's bookish advice to music: we can listen to an old piece every time a 'modern' composition makes its appearance.

E. W. ADAMS.

NIETZSCHE'S ATTITUDE TO WAGNER

A FRESH VIEW

It is rather unfortunate that when we think of Nietzsche's connection with music, it is almost invariably the history of his personal relations with Wagner which springs to the mind—the close friendship, followed by the bitter hostility of *The Case of Wagner* and the other pamphlets of later days. Accident threw the shadow of Wagner's art over all Nietzsche's thoughts on musical matters, but, Wagner or no Wagner, Nietzsche would still have devoted a great part of his thought to music. Even in boyhood he loved music more passionately than literature. He began to compose—it was his life-long hobby—and years afterwards he imagined he heard in 'Parsifal' echoes of things he himself had said in his youthful compositions. At first his favourite composer was Schumann, a curious fact when considered in the light of the reasons he gave for his admiration of Chopin, in a letter written while he was still a scholar at the Fürstenschule Pforta: 'I particularly admired in Chopin his freeing of music from German influences, from the tendency to the ugly, dull, pettily bourgeois, clumsy and self-important. Spiritual beauty and nobility, and, above all, aristocratic gaiety, freedom from restraint and splendour of soul, as well as southern warmth and intensity of feeling, were expressed by him for the first time in music.' The letter is of great importance, for in this explanation of his Chopin worship is revealed the secret, not only of the spell exercised on him by 'Tristan,' but of the Bizet worship of nearly thirty years later. Here already is the feeling which later found expression in the cry, 'Il faut méditerraniser la musique!' It was the constant element in Nietzsche's musical life, underlying all the apparent changes of taste and opinion.

It is important to establish this point, for there is a widespread impression that Nietzsche, like many brilliant people, was fickle. The Wagner episode, tremendously important as it was, was essentially only an episode. And, as we shall see, even as regards Wagner, Nietzsche's emotional reaction to the master's music was always fundamentally the same; it was only that he interpreted the reaction in quite a different way. Indeed, a sound case might be made for the view that Nietzsche was not so much a Wagner-worshipper as a 'Tristan' worshipper. If you probe deeply into one of his com-

mentaries on the gospel of Wagnerism, in nine cases out of ten you will find 'Tristan' at the bottom. His attitude towards the 'Ring' was always more cautious. At the height of his enthusiasm, a few weeks before he first met the master in person, we find him writing to his friend, Baron von Gersdorff, 'I have played but little as I have no piano here in Kosen, but I brought along the piano score of Wagner's "Walküre," in regard to which my feelings are so confused that I dare not venture an opinion on the subject. The greatest beauties and virtues are offset by equally great shortcomings and positive ugliness at times. And according to Riese and Buchbinder *plus a + minus a = 0*. (Oct. 11, 1868.) Again, when the friendship was drawing near the snapping-point, Frau Förster-Nietzsche specifically says of some hostile criticisms consequent on her brother's disillusionment at the first Bayreuth Festival in 1876: 'It must not be forgotten that all this criticism was directed against the Nibelung tetralogy and its author, not against "Tristan" and its creator. At that time, "Tristan" had practically been relegated to the background, or made the object of scathing criticism by some of the most fanatic Wagnerians. Even in Wahnfried, "Tristan" was seldom mentioned. . . . Had "Tristan" been the work chosen for performance at the first Festival, it is quite certain that my brother's criticisms would have been of quite a different character and his disappointment by no means so keen.'⁽¹⁾

Nietzsche's first book, *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* (1871), maintains the thesis that the greatness of Greek art was a consequence of early Greek pessimism—the book was afterwards re-subtitled *Hellenism and Pessimism*—and that its decline dated from the optimistic teaching of Socrates. The book, in spite of its confused and rhapsodic style, is an important contribution to the metaphysics of art. Unfortunately it is a mere torso of a much larger projected work on Hellenism in general, indeed a torso of only a part of it—and that recast and patched in order to please Wagner. Nietzsche had completed the first part of his study of Hellenism in April, 1871, when he visited Tribschen and found the composer in very low spirits. Wishing to make a practical gesture of friendship, he returned to Basle, cut out those chapters of his book not concerned with Greek tragedy and inserted a great deal of fresh matter demonstrating that the spirit of Greek tragedy, dead for two thousand years, had been reincarnated in modern German music—but only fully, of course, in the Wagnerian music-drama. A book so constructed could hardly fail to be unclear. Nietzsche was trying to say and to prove far too much that was not perfectly clear even to

(1) *The Nietzsche-Wagner Correspondence.*

himself, and the average reader is only bewildered and irritated by Nietzsche's second-hand Schopenhauerism and his poetico-metaphysical jargon about the 'antagonism and reconciliation of the Dionysian and Apollonian principles.' Except the rhapsodic account of the author's reactions to 'Tristan,' to which I shall return later, there is not much in *The Birth of Tragedy* to interest the musician of to-day.

But while writing and redrafting the book Nietzsche, in accordance with his usual habit, made innumerable notes and sketches, all carefully preserved, and one of these, an essay 'On Words and Music,' published posthumously in Vol. IX of the complete German edition of his works, contains some important observations on the nature of musical inspiration, particularly its inspiration by poetry. Nietzsche, following Schopenhauer, denies that such inspiration is ever given and contends that, while musical emotion may excite the activity of the visual or sentimental imagination, the converse is never the case—no musical idea is really born of a non-musical, a poetic or visual conception. Nietzsche is prepared to go even further than Schopenhauer, for while the latter held that music can express, not any particular joy or sorrow (or love, or hate or ecstasy or serenity), or any subject of joy or sorrow, but joy or sorrow in the abstract, Nietzsche says that genuinely inspired music does not express even joy or sorrow, but only indeterminate emotion. In other words, there is such a thing as purely musical emotion. Definite feelings only 'serve as symbols to music.' The lyrical poet, who is half a musician, is conscious of this musical emotion, but he 'gives an allegorical translation of it in the form of feelings. So with all those listeners who experience a definite emotional reaction to music. The power of music, reaching them only from a distance, appeals to an intervening world which gives them, as it were, a foretaste, a symbolic pre-notion of music properly so called, and this world is that of the feelings. . . . But all those who are affected by music only through the feelings must be told that they will always stay in the outer court and will never be admitted to music's Holy of Holies, for this cannot be manifested, but only symbolised, by feeling.'

Nietzsche's dictum is corroborated by modern scientific investigation. A Swiss, Dr. Odier, as a result of careful research (discussed in W. J. Turner's *Music and Life*), came to the conclusion that the most musical class of listener, though numerically the smallest, consists of 'those who experience an emotion *sui generis* and not to be compared with any other psychological phenomenon; in other words, a purely musical emotion inexpressible in other terms.' And Mr. Turner, who

apparently knew nothing of Nietzsche's theory, whole-heartedly agrees that this is so.⁽²⁾

But, it may be objected, what happens when a composer sets words to music, then? Does it follow that his music is necessarily uninspired, merely 'made'? What about the world's undeniably great songs? 'When a musician composes a song,' Nietzsche replies, 'it is neither the imagery nor the feelings expressed in the text which inspire him as a musician; but a musical inspiration from quite another sphere chooses this text as suitable for its own symbolic expression.' In case this sounds rather too fanciful we may compare it with the explanation given by a modern composer of genius—Igor Stravinsky—of his own choice of literary subjects for works conceived as abstract music: 'Suppose I am a painter. I paint, say, a portrait of a lady in *toilette de bal*, with her jewels. My portrait resembles the person painted. None the less it is painted for the pleasure of painting, despite its subject. Or I paint a picture of a street fight. The fight is a pretext for the picture, but the painting of it may be pure painting.' To return to Nietzsche: if the poem is only the 'pretext' or opportunity for the crystallisation of a vague purely musical emotion, 'there can be no question of any essential connection between poem and music; the two worlds of sound and image here brought into contact are too far removed from each other to be linked by any but an external bond; the poem merely provides a symbol and is to music what the Egyptian hieroglyphic of bravery is to the brave warrior himself. The highest revelations of music make us feel, in spite of ourselves, the clumsiness of all the feelings and pictorial representations in which people pretend to find some analogy with them. Thus Beethoven's last quartets make all definite representations ridiculous. Symbols here lose their meaning and even offend by their materiality.'

Developing this idea, Nietzsche argues that a poem wedded to great music makes no impression at all *as a poem*, and that, if it did, it would only detract from the effect of the music; the text exists only for the singers; the composer uses the human voice simply because it is the finest of instruments. He goes on to illustrate his theory by reference to Beethoven's 'Choral Symphony,' where he thinks 'Schiller's "Ode to Joy"' is entirely disproportionate to the redeeming, dithyrambic intoxication of the music, and is even submerged like a pale moonbeam in a sea of flame. Further, who can deny that, if we are not keenly conscious of this when listening to the music, it

(2) Compare also the unanimous conclusions of Vernon Lee, Gurney, Ortman, Hanslick, Myers and Clive Bell, cited in Max Schoen's study of 'The Experience of Beauty in Music' in *The Musical Quarterly* (January, 1931).

is only because, the music having already annihilated our sensibility to words and imagery, *we hear nothing at all of Schiller's poem?* All this splendid transport, the very sublimity of Schiller's verses, has a disturbing effect beside the naïve truth of the melody of "joy," and even makes a coarse and unpleasant impression; fortunately, amid the ever more and more splendid development of the choral song and the orchestral masses, we do not hear it, and that alone prevents our being conscious of the clash.' Even those who cannot entirely agree with Nietzsche must admit, if they are perfectly honest with themselves, that when listening to vocal music a strong conscious effort is required to counterbalance the overwhelming predominance of the music over the poem—and that few make that effort. The musician—I say nothing of other kinds of listener—who does not understand Italian, gains no additional pleasure from 'Voi che sapete' when it is sung in English; rather the reverse, for, apart altogether from the relative suitability of the two languages for musical treatment, the vowels and consonants substituted by a translator are unlikely to fit the melody as well as the vowels and consonants the composer had in mind in the first place. This is a deadly criticism levelled at the heart of ninety per cent. of modern songs. Who has not been conscious of the large element of artificiality in the *durchkomponiert* art-song even at its best? To what end is all the modern composer's faithfulness to the poet? At the best he only achieves a more or less literal translation of a work of art conceived in terms of one idiom into the terms of another. What is the gain? Even if we admit that this cramped, largely 'made' music can add anything to a poem, we must remember that it also takes away much (the natural poetic rhythm, for one thing) and distorts more. The world's great songs are those in which the music has run away with the words—whether great poetry or doggerel. And I suggest that this is true even of songs like Schubert's 'Döppelgänger' and the best of Moussorgsky and Hugo Wolf. The fact that a composer sets poor verse reflects on his literary taste, but not in the least on his musical ability; in fact, of the two he is more likely to make a good song out of verse which only sketches or hints at feelings than from a perfect and finished poem. It is arguable that by setting it to his music a composer literally reduces (or raises) all poetry, good or bad, to a common level—that of his music.

But is not all this, the logical consequence of Nietzsche's ideas at the very time when his friendship with Wagner was at its height, the most shocking heresy against all that Wagner taught? Unquestionably. Not quite such heresy as might appear, for Wagner himself was not always a Wagnerian in his practice. (We know, for instance,

that the 'Meistersinger' overture—that is, the *music* of a great deal of the Third Act—was finished before the *words* of the Third Act were written.) But it was heresy all the same. And, immediately after the passage last quoted, Nietzsche goes on to ask what one can think of the 'monstrous æsthetic superstition according to which this fourth movement of the Ninth was Beethoven's solemn profession of faith as to the limits of absolute music, and even opened, somehow or other, the gates to a new art in which music would now be able to make itself understood even by the "conscious mind."' The 'superstition' was, of course, one of Wagner's pet theories.

What is the explanation, then, of Nietzsche's attitude? The fact that this essay was published only after the author's death gives us a clue to it. As far as one can see, Nietzsche was never a true Wagnerian at all. His enthusiasm for Wagner's music—above all for 'Tristan'—may have led him to try to persuade himself that he was one; but even that is doubtful. Nietzsche's was an enigmatic personality. As he said himself, he was 'a labyrinth of a man.' We can only guess at what really went on in his tortuous mind and soul. His attitude in writing publicly in praise of a theorist in whom he had no whole-hearted belief, was disingenuous, to say the least, but there can be no doubt that Nietzsche was personally devoted to Wagner at this period and was prepared to go to any length to please him. 'To Wagner or to his wife?' someone may ask—not without justice, for it is now definitely established, in spite of the ridicule Frau Förster-Nietzsche pours on the idea, that Nietzsche did love Cosima. But there is no reason why a man should not be the sincere and devoted friend of the husband of the woman with whom he has had the misfortune to fall in love, though no doubt the fact accounts for much of Nietzsche's extraordinary bitterness after the break. We may put it, then, that Nietzsche admired the man and the composer, but, in spite of praise of Wagner's theories patched into his published writings for friendship's sake, was at least undecided about the author of 'Oper und Drama.' But the man began to weary him; Wagner's personality, his coarse humour and insatiable appetite for admiration, jarred his highly strung sensibility; no doubt secret jealousy played its part. And as early as 1874 he had lost most of his illusions about the composer.

In one of Nietzsche's note-books for that year occur these remarkable sentences: 'Wagner's youth was the aimless one of a universal dilettante. . . . Not one of our great composers was still, at twenty-eight, as bad a musician as Wagner. This insane doubt has often crossed my mind: Is Wagner really musical?' Here again we find a discrepancy between Nietzsche's private thoughts and his pub-

lished ones, for two years later he told the readers of his *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* that 'the enterprise at Bayreuth signifies in the realm of art the first circumnavigation of the globe,' and that it was a voyage that had resulted in 'the discovery not merely of a new art, but of Art itself.' As for Wagner, 'no artist of what past soever has yet received such a remarkable portion of genius.' And this of a man about whom he had come to the conclusion at least two years before, that he was 'an actor out of his proper sphere. He relies principally on music, but his attitude to music is that of an actor. . . . Wagner brings together all possible effective elements at a time when popular taste is dulled and demands extremely crass and vigorous methods. Everything is employed—the magnificent, the intoxicating, the bewildering, the grandiose, the frightful, the clamorous, the ecstatic, the neurotic. . . . Himself possessing the instincts of an actor, he wishes to imitate mankind only in the most effective manner. . . . Painting for effect is an extremely dangerous thing for artists. The intoxicating, the sensual, the unexpected, the ecstatic, the being-moved-at-any-price. Alarming tendencies.' As Pierre Lasserre says,⁽³⁾ 'The whole substance of *Der Fall Wagner* is already embodied in these notes of 1874. The difference lies in the tone. Here Nietzsche coldly confesses to himself what he sees in the work of a master whose friend he still is and who reckons on his open attachment. When he wrote *The Case of Wagner* he had grown to hate the pleasures as well as the painful impressions given him by Wagner's music.'

Nietzsche's attitude, from first to last, was that of a defender of the 'purity' of music. Now on this ground, now on that, he is always, as in the early essay 'On Words and Music,' asserting the superiority of music over the other arts and insisting that its temple must not be defiled. He had, of course, always been familiar with Wagner's doctrine that music in the drama is only a means, not an end in itself. But in his admiration for the music *as* music, feeling as almost everyone does the infinitely greater value of the music than of the other elements in the Wagnerian art-work, he had devised an ingenious explanation of the latter, given in *The Birth of Tragedy*. He addresses 'not those who make use of the scenic pictures, the words, and the emotions of the performers, in order to approximate thereby to musical perception; for none of these speaks music as their mother tongue and, in spite of the aids in question, do not get farther than the precincts of musical perception,' but 'those to whom music is, as it were, a mother's breast and who are connected with things almost exclusively by musical relations.' And he asks 'these genuine

(3) *Les Idées de Nietzsche sur la Musique*. Paris, 1907.

musicians ' ' whether they can imagine a man capable of hearing the Third Act of "Tristan and Isolde" without any aid of word and scenery, purely as a vast symphonic period, without expiring? Would not a man be *shattered* who, so to speak, had put his ear to the heart-chamber of the cosmic will, where he could feel the wild will-to-existence pouring out into all the arteries of the world? . . . Here interpose, between our highest musical excitement and the music itself, the tragic myth and the tragic hero—in reality only as symbols of the most universal facts, of which music alone can speak directly. . . . Suddenly we imagine we see only Tristan, as he lies there motionless, saying to himself, "The old tune. Why does it wake me?" And what before seemed to us a hollow sigh from the heart of all existence, now only tells us "how waste and void is the sea." And whereas, breathless, we felt we should expire through a convulsive distention of all our feelings, and only a slender thread bound us to our present existence, we now hear and see only the hero wounded to death and still not dying, with his despairing cry, "Longing! Longing! In dying still longing! for longing not dying!" ' ' In plain English, the stage-picture and the individual characters of the drama are necessary in order to tone down the too-overwhelming emotional effect of the music. Nietzsche is, in fact, only saying in his extravagant way what many of us express with less exaggeration, though with ridiculous coldness, when we say that the music of 'Tristan' is 'more effective in the concert hall, without voices, than in the theatre.'⁽⁴⁾ He was so convinced of the 'absolute' nature of the 'Tristan' music that he went so far as to say that 'any number of actual scenes might be used as passing manifestations of the same music. They could never exhaust its essence, but would always remain mere externalised copies of it.'

Nietzsche's disillusionment with Wagner was the natural consequence of his discovery that the music was, for the most part—above all in the 'Ring'—exactly what Wagner had always said it was, a means to a dramatic end; that when Wagner was an 'absolute'

(4) Romain Rolland remarks in *Musiciens d'Aujourd'hui*: 'I cannot help feeling that scenic reality takes away rather than adds to the effect of these philosophical fairylands. Malwida von Meysenbug told me that at the Bayreuth Festival of 1876, while she was following one of the "Ring" scenes very attentively with her opera-glasses, two hands were laid over her eyes, and she heard Wagner's voice say impatiently: "Don't look so much at what is going on. Listen!" It was good counsel. . . . One might say that the best way to follow a performance of a Wagner opera is with the eyes shut. So perfect is the music, so powerful its hold on the imagination, that it leaves nothing to be desired; what it suggests to the mind is infinitely finer than what the eyes may see. I have never shared the opinion that Wagner's works may be best appreciated in the theatre. His works are epic symphonies. As a frame for them I should like temples; as scenery, the illimitable land of thought; as actors, our dreams.'

musician it was only by accident and in spite of himself. He probably began to wonder, as others have wondered since, whether so many themes based on the arpeggio of the added sixth chord were the natural fruits of a genuinely fertile musical intelligence. He saw that Wagner was 'obliged to make patchwork—"motives," attitudes, formulæ, reduplications, centuplications; as a musician he remained a rhetorician.'⁽⁵⁾ Neither Wagner's enlargement of the resources of music nor his colossal skill in handling these resources, which Nietzsche never denied, compensated in the eyes of the disillusioned admirer for the absence of pure 'musical emotion.' Hence the 'insane doubts' and other questionings of 1874, which may be compared with this passage in *The Case of Wagner*, written fourteen years later:

Was Wagner a musician at all? At least he was something else in a *higher degree*, namely an incomparable *histrion*, the most astonishing theatrical genius that the Germans have had, our *scenic artist par excellence*. His place is elsewhere than in the history of music, with the grand true geniuses of which he must not be confounded. Wagner and Beethoven—that is a blasphemy—and in the end an injustice even to Wagner. . . . He *became* a musician, he *became* a poet, because the tyrant in him, his stage-player genius, compelled him to it. . . . Wagner was *not* a musician by instinct. He proved this himself by abandoning all lawfulness and all style in music, in order to make out of it what he required, a theatrical rhetoric, a means of expression, for strengthening attitudes, for suggestion, for the psychologically picturesque. Wagner might here pass for an inventor and an innovator of the first rank—he *has immeasurably increased the speaking power of music*; he is the Victor Hugo of music as language. Provided always one grants that music *may*, under certain conditions, not be music, but speech, tool or *ancilla dramaturgica*. Wagner's music, *not* taken under protection by theatrical taste, a very tolerant taste, is simply bad music.

Nor is there any reason for supposing that Nietzsche's emotional (or, more accurately, *sensuous*), as distinguished from his aesthetic, reaction to Wagner's music underwent any change. Even in *The Case of Wagner* he could say of 'Parsifal,' the very work which, through its Christianity, had snapped the last threads of the friendship, 'I admire that work. I should like to have composed it myself; not having done so, I at least understand it. . . . Wagner was never better inspired than at the end.'⁽⁶⁾ Most people would probably con-

⁽⁵⁾ *The Case of Wagner*.

⁽⁶⁾ Compare this with a passage in a letter to Peter Gast, written ten years earlier, speaking of the music, as apart from the subject of 'Parsifal': 'Recently I heard the Prelude to "Parsifal" for the first time (in Monte Carlo!). . . . Quite apart from all irrelevant questions (such as what purpose this music can serve and is meant to serve), but purely from an æsthetic standpoint, has Wagner ever written anything *better*?' (January 21, 1878.)

sider that an error of judgment, for it is generally agreed that there is a falling off in the musical inspiration of 'Parsifal.' But Nietzsche had not had so much time to weary of its magic as in the case of the 'Ring,' and the clarity and serenity of the music harmonised better with his predominant mood at that period. 'Dionysiac frenzy' no longer seemed to him the highest spiritual condition of which man is capable; Socrates had been forgiven. In his comments on the passage in *The Birth of Tragedy* dealing with 'Tristan,' Lasserre, who thinks the passage is to be regarded 'merely as a description of impressions,' points out that 'a day was to come when, in order to criticise this same work adversely, it was hardly necessary for Nietzsche to ascribe to it any other qualities than those he finds in it here. It was only that the "convulsive distension of all our feelings" no longer struck him as admirable or divine. . . . The "metaphysical" now seemed the "pathological"; the heaven of ecstasy became the hell of neurosis; and that impression of "infinity" given by the music of "Tristan" was attributed to the cunning of the composer in turning to account his very impotence to create beautiful, healthy and definite forms, in order to produce an effect of vague and intoxicating seductiveness.' Which is only another way of saying that although 'Tristan' still affected Nietzsche as powerfully as ever, he now recognised that its effect was emotional rather than musical. But whereas most people, better balanced because less sensitive, would have concluded only that the æsthetic element was, after all, less important than the emotional—not, as they had thought, the reverse—Nietzsche could now see *nothing* but the merely emotional where before he had seen only the purely musical. We must remember that, on such points, Nietzsche was as sensitive as the scales used by scientists, turned by a speck of dust.

Only one thing remains to be added in explanation of Nietzsche's *volte-face* with regard to Wagner's music. Long after he had discovered its 'impurity,' but years before he wrote *The Case of Wagner*, his musical *taste* underwent a change, he tells us, a change interestingly connected with the conception of 'Also sprach Zarathustra.' Nietzsche's own account of this may be found in 'Ecce Homo.' After telling how the idea of 'eternal recurrence,' the underlying *motif* of his own masterpiece, came to him in August, 1881, he goes on: 'If I reckon back a few months from that day, I find, as a premonitory symptom, a sudden and profound change in my taste, above all in music.' The change, which took place in the spring of 1881, while staying with his musician friend, Peter Gast, at the little mountain spa of Recoaro, near Vicenza, was perhaps not so sudden and so profound as he imagined; it was probably only that he was

suddenly and profoundly conscious of the change; but it explains a great deal—including the tone of *Der Fall Wagner*. (It is inconceivable that spite against Cosima did more than deepen the colours.) 'On the contrary,' it may be objected, 'it seems to confuse the whole business. If Nietzsche was aware of Wagner's "non-musicalness" as early as 1874, what has a change of taste in 1881 to do with it? And does it not invalidate your theory that Nietzsche's emotional reaction to Wagner's music underwent no fundamental change?' I do not think so. One may know that something is bad art, yet still like it;⁽⁷⁾ and one may intensely dislike a work of art and yet be profoundly excited by it. I think we need attach no particular importance to this 'conversation at Recoaro,' except as indicating that the exciting in art, though it had not lost its power over Nietzsche's senses, now offended his taste instead of seducing it in spite of itself. It put the stamp of warm, definite feeling on what had previously been only dim *Ahnung* and cold, intellectual judgment.

To sum up: apart from Nietzsche's two published writings on Wagner—*The Birth of Tragedy* (which we know was patched and adapted to please his friend) and *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* (a more or less formal *Festschrift*, which may have been written from a sense of duty, almost as much as of true friendship)—there is no evidence that Nietzsche was ever a true Wagnerian at all. In 1868, at twenty-four, before he had met Wagner, he was criticising 'Die Walküre' adversely; in 1871, when his admiration of the composer was at its height and he was on the most intimate terms with the Tribschen family circle, he was secretly laughing at one of Wagner's most cherished theories as a 'monstrous æsthetic superstition,' while even *The Birth of Tragedy* contains a very unorthodox commentary on 'Tristan'; and three years later he was conceiving 'insane doubts' as to whether Wagner was a true musician at all. The very interesting personal relations of the two men, to which so much attention has been given, have very little to do with the case; they only befog the plain facts that Nietzsche was powerfully excited by Wagner's music, and that he was profoundly disappointed and disgusted when he found that the excitement was not musical but emotional.

GERALD ABRAHAM.

(7) 'In my student days I said: "Wagner is a romanticist, not of the art in its zenith, but in its last quarter; soon it will be night!" Despite this insight I was a Wagnerian; I knew better, but I could not do otherwise.' (Note-book of 1874.)

SOME SOCIAL CAUSES OF THE PRESENT MUSICAL CRISIS

Few will deny that the state of music as an art is very different from what it was fifty, or even less than fifty, years ago. Everything has altered—the public, the musicians, their attitude towards one another, their mutual relationships. Some may welcome these changes, others may rebel against them, but of their existence there can be no doubt.

Before discussing the psychological changes for the worse we must analyse many external, purely material, causes and factors which have contributed to the present state of things. We must compare, first of all, the mere numbers of persons who feel a need for music—the extent of the musical market, so to speak. This market was very insignificant in the eighteenth century and even at the beginning of the nineteenth. A little earlier, when music served the interests of the Church, it was more important, but it was not restricted to music; it was more of a religious market in which music occupied quite a small space as one of the products and attributes of religion. Music as such, music for music's sake, began when instrumentalism and opera came into being, and of these the latter has always been most in demand and has attracted far more buyers.

As to pure or instrumental music, the number of its proficientes was ridiculously small according to modern standards. It should be remembered that music, especially the instrumental variety, was developed in the higher strata of society. The classical era of the art was very closely connected with the names and estates of a few princely magnates, who have found their way into musical history. The brilliant group of classical composers was nothing more than the drawing-room circle of Prince Esterhazy and others like him. Notwithstanding the very limited public, the composers of that period obtained universal recognition, owing to the simple fact that the whole of the literary world and of musical criticism (then on a very small scale) looked to that select circle, into which everyone who showed himself to be possessed of talent was drawn; culture in general was created by it and for it. And around it was the obscure, amorphous mass which contributed nothing to the cause.

If the demand was small the supply was correspondingly scanty. I have been able to compile an interesting table showing the increase

in the number of composers between the years A.D. 1200 and 1930; the sources of information, though not always complete, are reliable. All composers of whom there is any mention in history are included, irrespective of the degree of talent with which they were endowed. Here are the figures :

Average number of composers.	50-year periods.	Average number of composers.	50-year periods.
45 ...	1200-1250	570 ...	1800-1850
60 ...	1250-1300	620 ...	1850-1900
75 ...	1300-1350	710 ...	1900-1950
100 ...	1350-1400	940 ...	1950-2000
150 ...	1400-1450	1,560 ...	2000-2050
180 ...	1450-1500	4,700 ...	2050-2100
240 ...	1500-1550	16,540 ...	2100-2150
300 ...	1550-1600		

These data are of course approximate and are understated rather than otherwise, since many of the smaller composers are ignored in the historical records. On the whole, however, we get a sufficiently clear illustration of a certain elemental, not to say alarming, growth in the number of persons attracted to musical composition. Speaking generally, the composer population increases in a geometrical progression, as is assumed to be the case with any population. And in consequence thereof we are not at all surprised that the law of the struggle for existence begins to make itself acutely felt.

On the other hand we see that the consumers of music are also becoming more numerous. Unfortunately even approximate statistics, such as those cited above, cannot be adduced here, but we can form a fairly clear idea by analysing the general number of concerts and the attendances at them. The figures will, of course, be far from complete, as they are obtainable for the big centres only.⁽¹⁾

There may exist ingenuous persons to whom figures mean everything who will see in those quoted above a proof of the triumph of progress and culture. Unhappily the matter cannot be disposed of so simply. The progress of culture is always based on the mysterious reciprocity between the artist and his public, on the mutual training of the artistic tastes of these two categories, but it must be remembered

(1) Musical consumption, i.e., the number of persons frequenting places in which they expect to be provided with music, takes a huge leap at the beginning of the twentieth century, and this coincides with the development of a vast system of cinematographs all over the world. Apart from its popularising influence in a musical respect, the cinema has had a great deal to do with accustoming the general public to a careless attitude towards the performance of music. Music in the cinema is music to which one need not listen. The indifference to it, characteristic of the times in which we live, owes much to this habituation to a sort of tonal background to life, to the continual irritation of the aural nerves by something in the guise of music.

that each may give way to the other. In the favourable case the public pays attention to the artist, and by its own cultural tradition keeps him up to the mark. The result is that he expresses the feelings of the given circle of people. But if that circle is enlarged its cultural tone is inevitably lowered, and the herd tastes begin to dominate. We may have a very high opinion of the importance and significance of democratic institutions to the life of the state and the welfare of individuals, but unhappily there can be no doubt (and the history of culture proves it) that the democratisation of countries and states invariably paralyses the development of taste, though the paralysing process is protracted and laborious and many years behind the times.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially the latter, have been marked by an enormous influx of the masses into the cultural life. They have been successfully attracted to it, but culture has thereby suffered a deterioration in quality. Delicacy and refinement of feeling have been lost and tastes have been coarsened. The stratum of society which maintains a cultural level of taste is surrounded by a vast concourse of crude and uncultivated persons, who, nevertheless, are not altogether neutral in their appraisal of art and its phenomena. Complete neutrality was characteristic of the masses in earlier times, when they held entirely aloof from cultural matters; to-day they dare to have ideas of their own and to take part in the appraisal of an artistic performance, enforcing their democratic opinions—which have no tradition behind them—by the hypnotising power of mere numbers. That is to say, the qualitative characteristics are outbalanced by the quantitative.

Hence these isolated groups of persons of refined and elevated tastes nowadays lead to a different existence from that of their compeers in the past. There was a time when Prince Esterhazy's salon provided musical culture for the whole world, and its æsthetic criterion was the only standard. Now, thanks to the altered conditions to which I have referred, these groups—encompassed by the masses, who have begun to talk about *their* tastes—have lost their hegemony and authority, and their opinion is no longer the categorical imperative.

Every process carries within itself its own ruin and an antidote. I imagine that the process which is democratising music and establishing a ruder standard may happily wear itself out. The splitting up of the taste-groups may contribute to this end. Something of the sort happened at the dawn of our democratic era, when music, formerly a single entity, was divided into two sections, classified as 'light' and 'serious' respectively. The former satisfied the artistic requirements of the newly-awakened portion of the community at the

beginning of the nineteenth century. This division is no longer of any assistance. An enormous number of people are *poseurs*, and they have a deteriorating effect on the comprehension and appreciation of musical events. But there is another antidote—the indifference to the existence of a phenomenon which is innate in all snobbery. Already we see the indifference which the masses are beginning to display towards music. Through inertia the musical mechanism continues to be evolved at the rate of speed set up by its tremendous development in the nineteenth century. But the masses who were drawn to music have ceased to take a profound and serious interest in it. From a purely economic point of view music does not justify its existence—for evidence of this one has only to look at the balance-sheets of nearly every concert undertaking. The crowds attracted in some way or other to the 'musical exchange' are not in a position to maintain the army of artists, which is far larger than is required. A huge proportion of modern musical enterprise is kept alive by artificial means (advertisement, the artist's thirst for fame, the financial support of the performer himself), but the real trouble is that our musical life is surrounded by an ocean of chilly indifference.

Modern technical achievements (the gramophone, wireless, etc.) may possibly prove useful to the progress of genuine art. They may entice the inert masses, to whom music—with its refined culture and its appreciation of the essential nature of tone and the quality of experience—is on the whole an unpalatable morsel. The substitutes for music which fill our capitals with cacophonous noises are doomed to be the musical pabulum of the many; their allotted rôle is to provide a place for the genuine article, which is fated always to be the food of the few. I have come across hardly anyone who would listen to wireless or the gramophone with the rapture with which we used to hear real music in days gone by. They listen because it is the correct thing to have these instruments and to make use of them, and because they are convenient, since, unlike living artists, they are not offended if someone starts a noisy meteorological discussion during their performance, or turns them off at any moment. This attitude betokens a colossal indifference to the nature of music, and a lack of an elementary respect for art.

It is not true that our age is, from a financial point of view, particularly unfavourable for the composer. With a few exceptions (and they are not typical) the great composers have always been the economic stepsons of the period in which they lived. I think, on the contrary, that existence is easier for him nowadays, but that it is far more difficult for him to become known. Beethoven, for instance, was plunged into a single small and select musical circle, which for

him was the whole world, whereas the modern composer is immersed in a vast ocean of people indifferent to music, though still known as the 'musical world.' He cannot calmly await recognition by those who understand; merely to attract attention he has to wear himself out, to sing his own praises, and to make use of doubtful methods of advertisement.

The salvation of music from the contemporary crisis of indifference masquerading as the 'wide diffusion of art' depends on the possibility of re-creating that select musical circle, of restoring the hierarchical constitution of musical society. Music, like many other arts (except, perhaps, literature), must realise that it is not in a position to react powerfully and qualitatively on such vast masses of people; it must abjure the idea of world-power and imperialism. If it is to remain good music it is not called upon to command the hordes who have been attracted to the musical world, and who weigh it down like so much heavy and unwholesome ballast, hindering its musical life and development. Music must know how to be sufficiently heroic to leave to sportsmen and film-stars the democratic laurels, the accumulation of millions, and the stupefying enthusiasm of crowds; and it must be able to return to the silence and solitude of its own world, now almost destroyed. To the pusillanimity of the majority of contemporary composers, even the most prominent, which drives them to compete unsuccessfully with boxing champions for fame and popularity, is due the fact that the return—not to Bach, as Stravinsky imagines, but to music—has not yet been achieved.

LEONID SABANEV.

Trans. by S. W. PRING.

THE PLEASURES OF RECOGNITION

It is scarcely realised that one of the most important of man's lesser pleasures is the pleasure of recognition. Unlike some pleasures, golf, cricket, dancing, horse-racing, it is open to all, rich or poor, young or old; furthermore, it seems to vary in inverse ratio to the individual's importance, the inconspicuous members of society having by way of compensation for their insignificance a larger field for the exercise of this pleasure. It is obvious that a cat has more chance of recognising a king than *vice versa*.

How great a part this pleasure of recognition plays in our lives can be noticed at an ordinary family luncheon. Sometimes the conversation opens with an enquiry, 'Did you see anybody when you were in town?'—or sometimes, if the person or thing seen is of great interest, with a rhetorical question on the part of the lucky witness, 'Who do you think I saw in town this morning?' In each case it will generally be found that this act of recognition was not followed by any subsequent incident. Merely to have seen some person is sufficient and entitles the lucky individual to score over those who have not been so fortunate.

Occasionally further details are added. 'Who d'you think I saw eating a Bath bun at Booth's?' begins one excited member of the family group. 'Who?' choruses the remainder. 'The Bishop' shouts the happy speaker with the triumph of a player playing an unexpected trump. The announcement is greeted with mixed noises. 'The Bishop?' questions papa, with a touch of incredulous contempt at such an unepiscopal *faux pas*; 'At Booth's?' questions mamma, who never patronises restaurants in her own locality; 'A Bath bun?' questions little Anthony, delighted to discover that the eating of a bun is not incompatible with the wearing of a mitre.

Sometimes the game is played outside the family circle, strangers vying with others in friendly rivalry for the distinction of having been the first to spot some celebrity. In a large crowd, men, between whom no word has passed, will be seen to nudge each other, whispering as they do so, 'That's the Prince of Finland,' 'There's Don Chapford'; and the information spreads like wild fire, until everyone in the huge concourse is nudging his neighbour, convinced

in his own mind that he has told someone else something which he did not know before.

Sometimes the game is played by post, when the fever of spring is affecting the intelligence and weakening the powers of restraint, and the post-bags of our daily papers are crammed with letters from correspondents claiming to have heard the cuckoo. Each writer knows that his information pleases no one but himself; but that does not deter him. Should he notice that a correspondent from Balham has heard the cuckoo on April the second, he will immediately seize a pen and state that he heard the cuckoo unmistakably on April the first in Tooting.

That the cuckoo, a bird notorious for the laxity of its domestic views and for its proverbial stupidity, should choose Tooting for its first visit is a matter upon which residents might, one would have thought, have preserved a decent reticence.

In recent years our go-ahead Press, with the wishes of their readers in mind, have organised and commercialised the pleasures of recognition. 'All you have to do,' they say, 'is to recognise our representative who will visit the following towns.' Recognition produces its own reward—one guinea. Little do they know of the intolerable nuisance which this offer may cause to anyone who resembles their auriferous ambassador. A humdrum citizen is playing golf on an extensive common, gradually he realises that he is becoming an object of admiration to a little knot of onlookers. At first he is vain enough to imagine that his style, which resembles that of Mr. Bobby Jones in every detail except that of hitting the ball, is drawing the crowd; but after many futile shots he realises with shame that if they are drawn thither it must be by motives other than admiration. Then the crowd begins to surge towards him, led by the most fleet of foot, who rush up to him, addressing him as Mr. Chips or Mr. Snaps and demanding a guinea for the insult.

Sometimes the enterprising journals vary the game and offer photographs of half a dozen pairs of trouser legs from which legs—*ex pedibus*—you are asked to discover the Prime Minister—*Herculem*. Or sometimes they publish unusual views of cars, asking their readers to name the makers, a form of entertainment which brings an occasional reward to some lucky spotter at the cost of much varnish and paint to the unlucky owner.

Seeing then how deeply the love of recognition is ingrained in humanity, it is only natural that it plays a great part in our enjoyment of music. 'I like to hear the things I know, my dear,' says a lady to her friend, 'and so I shall go and hear the "Messiah."' When she hears the air, 'He shall feed His flock,' she murmurs to her friend,

'Dear George used to play this so tastefully on our harmonium,' or, *apropos* of 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' 'Dear Elizabeth used to sing that so feelingly.'

One cause of man's dislike of anything new is that he feels he will not recognise anything familiar or friendly—a fear which lurks behind the horror of the ultimate unknown, and causes us to take up any new appointment with a sinking heart. And oh! the pleasure of recognising some old familiar friend in such uncongenial surroundings. A young man goes to a strange *dépôt* for a course in some military instructions. All is new and hateful. Then to his delight he finds that the adjutant is an old school friend whom he has not seen since they parted ten years ago. Such an experience the B.B.C. is giving daily to hundreds of listeners who cannot thank them for that pleasure. A listener is compelled by some social necessity to sit through a wireless performance of some concert. He is bored, restless; and then suddenly there starts a tune which he knows quite well. 'Why, that's what dear old Muggins used to play in his rooms at Cambridge,' he exclaims. 'I must remember that. What is it?' It turns out to be Beethoven's 'Seventh Symphony,' which becomes henceforward one of his intimate and beloved friends.

A curious and inexplicable thing this memory for tunes. They seem by dint of frequent repetition to hollow out a sort of channel in the memory, a channel which never loses its shape or contours, so that whenever, even after many years the melodic strain flows again, it naturally pursues its proper course, giving the hearer that exquisite feeling of satisfaction and refreshment.

One reason for the popularity of certain types of music is that it contains fragments or suggestions which all can recognise. For this reason the ordinary person always wants to know what a piece is called—they want to have some picture to hold their attention. Any piece which has a few notes of recognisable natural sounds, *e.g.*, a cuckoo's call, will become popular however dreary or slinky it may otherwise be. Of all the works of Delius the most popular is 'On hearing the first cuckoo,' not because the people like it particularly but because they enjoy detecting the notes of the cuckoo.

The immense vogue of descriptive pieces is due almost entirely to the fact that they contain certain features—a peal of bells, a familiar tune, a characteristic rhythm—which cannot escape detection. Let us collect such features into a romantic idyll which we will call 'On the pigsty wall' and to which we will attach a programme with, of course, an illustrated title page to aid the imaginations of those who cannot be stimulated by music or literature.

'A young farmer is sitting on the pigsty wall munching fat bacon. The clock strikes six (twelve would be better but it takes such an insufferably long time). Beside him a nightingale is singing a passionate lament (the title page displays a bird whose shape casts aspersions upon its pedigree). A young nun passes (you can always tell when a young nun passes because she sings "Ave Maria": an old nun sings "A few more years shall roll"). She thinks of a young soldier whom she used to love before she took the veil, but whom, alas, she will never see again. The sound of munched bacon, similar to the sound of munched bananas, strikes her ear and awakens in her heart a sympathetic chord. She gazes (through her veil) into his eyes. It is her soldier. A regiment marches boldly down the road. The sergeant recognises the young farmer as a deserter. The young farmer is led away. The young nun weeps but still continues singing.' That sort of thing would probably have immense sale, giving as it does countless opportunities for the listener to recognise the obvious sequence of events.

The appeal of Wagner is to a great extent due to his power of illustration, for just as children and those who are young in literature prefer books with illustrations, so those who are immature or untrained in music like sounds which illustrate objects or ideas with which they are already familiar. And even those of us who pride ourselves upon our preference for abstract music cannot but feel a twinge of excitement as we await some particular sound, the boom of a gong, the clash of a cymbal, the groan of a tuba, which is used to illustrate some particular action. The pleasure of recognition is one which is part of our constitution and cannot be eradicated by an effort of will or by the dictates of good taste. It is the basis of all musical structures from the fugue to the sonata—forms in which definite themes are presented to us in the exposition (in the classical form the exposition was always repeated to make the subsequent acts of recognition more certain) with such simplicity that the wayfaring men, though fools, could not fail to grasp them. Always in fugues, very frequently in sonatas, the principal subject was announced in a single line. Nowadays such a method is discarded in favour of less obvious methods—perhaps we should say that the methods of our detective-fiction writers has been borrowed by our composers. Villains are no longer proclaimed villains in chapter one as in the good old days of Fielding. Readers must discover such matters for themselves, and probably they will not detect the criminal until the very last page. So, to-day, the method of composition is not to exhibit our principal themes in superb isolation, but to conceal them beneath an obscuring cloud of harmony, or to utter them in fragments, or else, reversing the

laws of nature, to anticipate their existence in solid form by making them appear as skeletons or ghosts. But whatever method is used, the appeal is the same with this difference, that the classical composers made sure that their work should be understood at the first hearing, while composers of to-day hope that their work will be understood at the x-teenth time. Unfortunately it is not every composer with a taste for obscurity who can command a large number of performances. He must first convince the multitude that his obscure utterances are worth studying and this he can only do by producing works which appeal without much study. Browning has his large public because he was able by such poems as 'Saul,' 'Rabbi Ben Ezra,' 'The Pied Piper,' to convince the multitude that he had something to say and knew how to say it. Brahms has a huge public even for his most serious and profound works, but that is because he proved by such works as the Sextet (op. 18), the waltzes, the 'Liebeslieder,' the violin sonatas, that he had something to say and whatever he wrote was probably well worth study.

There is a good deal then to be said for composers who seek to satisfy the human craving to be given something which they can recognise, and if a composer wishes to write symphonies of portentous length and impenetrable obscurity let him realise that he may have to prove his claim to hold his listeners' attention against their will by first producing something which they are not only willing but anxious to hear.

ALEXANDER BRENT SMITH.

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C. B. O.

BOOK REVIEWS

Gerolamo Frescobaldi. By Luigi Ronga. Fratelli Bocca: Turin.

This comprehensive study of the life and the art of a composer whose name is familiar but whose works are unknown to the immense majority of musicians, should be of considerable help to those who may wish to learn something about Frescobaldi. The biographical side is terse and perhaps more succinct than one could wish. It is true that the life of the composer was outwardly uneventful. But the development of the mind of a creative artist is a study which cannot be brushed aside as fit for 'the cunning industry of the many experts in psychology.' The value of this study is all in the thoughtful presentation of Frescobaldi's works which are all reviewed and commented upon, from the early 'Fantasie' to the late 'Canzoni,' including the 'Diversae Modulationes,' the existence of which was apparently unknown to other biographers.

Signor Ronga's method is that of the scholar. He has taken nothing for granted nor does he expect the reader to accept assertions without proof. Hence frequent comparisons and discussions of problems which lead us far afield, but are never uninteresting and often illuminating. A certain amount of controversy was, of course, inevitable and the sins of W. Fischer and A. W. Ambros had to be exposed before the justice of claims made by others could be admitted. But, in the main, there is little controversial matter and much that is constructive in so far as it leads to a better understanding of an art and style too remote from our time to be appreciated at its true worth without some expert guidance. The comparisons in which Gabrieli and his contemporaries are used as touchstone do show in a better light certain features of Frescobaldi's music and the moral is pointed efficaciously by frequent musical illustrations.

Signor Ronga denies that the influence of Sweelinck on Frescobaldi was at all important and brings documentary evidence to prove that the Italian's visit to Holland was much shorter than was generally thought. He supports Haberl against Seiffert in the contention that the introduction of chromaticism in organ music is due mainly to Frescobaldi. Such questions are mainly the concern of the historian. The performer must derive more practical advantages from the analytical study of Frescobaldi's music, which is critical and thorough. Some of the issues raised, however, show how at times theory and practice, history and interpretation support one another. A case in point is given by Frescobaldi's attitude towards the problem of the relation between word and note. The author points out how his predecessors at times failed to obey laws they themselves had proclaimed, while Frescobaldi without a set programme solves the problem admirably because of his being gifted with an exceptional sense for the value of words. This is important in the history of the reform which Galilei initiated when he protested against the cavalier treatment of

poems by the madrigalists. It also points the way to the interpreter anxious to know the exact worth of a melodic design which has been influenced and suggested to the composer by the character of the words used by the poet.

F. B.

A Repertoire of English Cathedral Music. Compiled by E. H. Fellowes and C. Hylton Stewart. O.U.P. 1s.

—gives a list of about 700 compositions arranged under the seasons of the Church year, and the part of the service to which they belong, which are published by seven different firms. The only omission seems to be that there is no indication when the number of voices is more than four. A repertory of music for parish churches is to follow.

A. H. F. S.

Practical Course of Study in Music. By Sister Mary Constance. White-Smith: Boston, Mass. \$1.25.

This is a complete course of musical instruction for school children—divided into eight separate grades, with methods of approach to each, with suggested remedies for common errors and with lists of tunes for detailed study. The work is planned—even in its appreciation courses—upon the pedagogical principle that children learn to do by doing; it provides a number of devices and projects, the outcome of experiment and of a wide and varied class-room experience, which should 'lessen the tediousness usually associated with the teaching of the necessary musical technique.' As an alternative to traditional song it uses the liturgical music of the Catholic Church—the Gregorian Chant in particular—as a basis for class choralism. It insists, and very rightly, upon ear-training as a daily essential to the successful working of the scheme. The value of the work would have been enhanced if a complete course of aural culture in the different grades had been indicated. Aural tests, too, should be given from time to time as purely dictation exercises, or how is individual progress to be assessed? For the rest the suggestions are helpful; the course is carefully laid out and concisely expressed. Let the inexpert but always enthusiastic teacher master these details—really a not very formidable task—and he may have the satisfaction of knowing that his class is at any rate moving in the right direction on sound lines.

Y. B.

Foundations of Practical Harmony and Counterpoint. By R. O. Morris. Macmillan and Co. Second edition, 1931.

In this (the second) edition, a short new chapter has been added on free counterpoint in three parts (Ch. xx). This serves as a study preliminary to the combination of three free moving parts. Some additional exercises are also inserted here and there. We agree with Mr. Morris's conviction that strict counterpoint—not the hybrid thing that used to be taught, and still drags on here and there, but the

technique of the sixteenth century exactly as it was—is too highly specialised a study for the average beginner.

The book does not pretend to be exhaustive in harmony, it only goes as far as the chord of the dominant ninth, which is probably as far as the students for whom it is intended ought to go. Mr. Morris is sometimes inclined to take knowledge on the part of the student for granted. The first time the words 'common chord' and 'false relation' are introduced, they are not explained. But in the hands of a competent teacher Mr. Morris's book will serve its purpose admirably.

C. H. K.

Johann Vesque von Püttlingen. By Helmut Schultz. Gustav Bosse Verlag: Regensburg. pp. 288.

This is one of a series of studies in musical research issued under the auspices of the University of Leipzig. Its subject (b. 1803, d. 1888) was a Viennese legal official who in his spare time wrote a great mass of music; Liszt produced his operas at Weimar, and he seems always to have moved in the inner circles of his day. Herr Schultz gives a twenty-pages-long catalogue of works, most of them printed; Vesque (who published his music under the pseudonym of 'J. Hoven') attempted practically all forms of composition, but his greatest productivity was in songs, to which Herr Schultz devotes the bulk of his book—of Heine's poems, alone, he set 146.

Herr Schultz's industry is beyond praise, and he makes no exaggerated claims. But very few of his readers will know anything of Vesque's music apart from these 120 examples; and it is very doubtful if they will be spurred to closer enquiry. The least unremarkable things seem to be in the settings of Heine's humorously ironical poems; as a rule, the music says, it must be confessed, very little indeed, capable as is its technical workmanship in its unassuming fashion.

E. W.

Struktur-Probleme in primitiver Musik. By Wilhelm Heinitz. Friederichsen, de Gruyter and Co.: Hamburg. pp. 258.

This book is somewhat more specialised than its title might suggest. It deals with primitive music in only a few of its aspects: the songs of the Korana Hottentots, of the Nyiha tribe (between Tanganyika and Nyassaland), of the inhabitants of Kate (an island apparently somewhere near New Guinea), and of the Sioux Indians of Porcupine, South Dakota—represented, alas, only in a visiting circus at Hamburg. Twenty-four pages in musical notation (reproducing, by special signs, the inflections of the phonographic records) give the evidence; the rest of the book is an exhaustive discussion of the various so-called 'factors'—temporal, energetic, spatial, temporal-energetic, temporal-energetic-spatial, temporal-energetic-pseudospacial, qualitative' (each of these subtly subdivided). Herr Heinitz has unquestionably performed his task with extreme thoroughness, and the edifice he has erected is most imposing; whether, considering the scantiness and fragility of his material, it is not also rather top-heavy, it is perhaps unscholarly to surmise.

E. W.

Adrian Willaert in der weltlichen Vokalmusik seiner Zeit. By Erich Hertzmann. Breitkopf und Härtel: Leipzig. pp. 86.

This is an able and interesting little book. Dividing his subject into three sections—the 'chanson,' the madrigal, and the popular Italian song-forms—Herr Hertzmann discusses, with much knowledge both of the music and of what has been written about it, the compositions of Willaert himself and of contemporaries (Festa and Cipriano de Rore are the most familiar) with whom he had artistic contacts. The madrigalian chapter is perhaps the most noteworthy, though in his elaborately detailed grouping of Willaert's madrigals into four separate styles in a space of nine years Herr Hertzmann seems to have yielded to a love of over-precise systematisation. There are a good many helpful examples in music-type. About one of them (p. 11), starting as follows—



he writes:—'The first version of "J'ayme mon amy" is indeed distinctly weak, . . . there are numerous tonal harshnesses, which give the piece an unsafe impression.'

But surely the two E's in the fourth bar should be flattened, on the principles of *musica ficta*? Herr Hertzmann often, and rightly, makes similar adjustments, but curiously omits to do so here; unadjusted, this passage is not only harsh but seems historically well-nigh impossible—whatever may happen beyond the seven bars that he quotes.

E. W.

Die Geschichte des Gregorianischen Gesanges in den protestantischen Gottesdiensten. By Theobald Schrems. St. Paulusdruckerei: Freiburg, Schweiz. pp. 166.

Herr Schrems, who holds the post of 'Domkapellmeister' at Regensburg, has written a useful book on an interesting subject—deplorably lax as has been his proof-reading of English words. He deals in detail with Luther's use of plainsong, the 'Cantionalien' of the sixteenth century and their connection with plainsong, the ecclesiastical ordinances of the same period, and subsequent developments during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries down to the 'Reformbewegung' (a rather question-begging term, perhaps) started in the nineteenth. Normally, of course, he has to do with German matters; but there is also a good deal about Sweden, the United States, and

our own country—where, as is fitting, Dr. Palmer's name has pride of place.

E. W.

Linie und Form: Bach—Beethoven—Brahms. By Hans Meyer. C. F. Kahnt: Leipzig. pp. 236.

On the third page of this book Herr Meyer makes the admirable remark: 'We need certainties, scientific facts, no æsthetic impressions, no soulful triflings.'

Certainly he completely forgoes the two latter, and for their absence from a book on musical interpretation we must needs be profoundly thankful; but does he, after all, really give us the two former?

His method is to take certain works—the B minor and E flat 'Sinfonias' of Bach, the 'Appassionata' sonata, and the op. 118 'Clavierstücke' of Brahms—and break up their texture into minute fragments; these are then analysed and correlated at great length, with the help of elaborate diagrams and a considerable quantity of mathematics. Parallelisms with others of Bach's works are discovered; Beethoven's three movements are made to interact in complex fashion; and Brahms's pieces are formed into a connected suite, with No. 1 as the 'Ur-Intermezzo,' and tiny figures from any one of the six turning up in any other, sideways or upside-down if not in more patently recognisable form. It is all immensely laborious and ingenious, but . . . On p. 52 Herr Meyer writes: 'Let us beware of the reasonable doubt that Bach did not in creating have to see what *our* weak eyes now begin to recognise'—but this is not really to the point. No one denies that composers know their own architecture, nor that it has sometimes been of this type; and Herr Meyer's pages contain indeed many thoughtful and valuable observations. But to preserve artistically-minded discrimination and a due sense of proportion is vital. In their absence, this kind of 'research' becomes only too easily a disease, in which the patient sinks into Cloudeuckooland visions of the endless evolutions of anything into anything else. What a treatise, for example, might not be written on the unfolding throughout the ages of the great Ur-Thema of 'Drei blinde Mäuse'!

In referring, by the by (p. 161), to the (well-nigh certainly conscious) rising and falling thirds in the themes of Beethoven's op. 106 sonata, Herr Meyer speaks of 'this phenomenon the logical solution of which was left unobserved till to-day.' Perhaps 'to-day' is not meant to be taken literally; anyhow, the point was a commonplace of Beethoven-criticism in England at least a generation ago.

E. W.

Stravinsky. Par André Schaeffner. Paris: Rieder. 20 fr.

Stravinsky has had, more than any other living composer except Richard Strauss, what is called a good press. Not that he has always been fortunate in the quality of the praise that has come his way. Among it there has been a large amount of beating of the big drum, ephemeral panegyrics whose emptiness is only equalled by the implied supposition that the reader of them is endowed with a similar infirmity of critical perception. Diaghilev's energies were often directed to this transparent publicity, while Stravinsky himself has not helped by

descending into the arena of interviews and suchlike disclosures. Against a background of that kind any reasonably restrained study must of necessity show up well, though the one before us, which certainly is reasonable as well as being based on close knowledge of the material dealt with, can bear comparison with musical literature more scholarly and reliable than the average Stravinskiana. With Boris de Schloezer's book (1929) it is in the vanguard of reputable publications on the subject. M. Schaeffner takes the works in the chronological order of composition and briefly traces the evolution of the composer's style as visible therein. In so doing he lights upon one or two helpful explanations of small points. One of these is the suggestion that the superimposed triads in 'Petrouchka' may be said to portray the conflict between the two ideas of marionette and human being, a point which only needed to be made to appear feasible. Another is the meaning of the heading 'Courants d'air' to a movement of 'Rossignol,' which was inexplicable before attention had been drawn to the passage M. Schaeffner quotes from Hans Andersen.

Sc. G.

Rythme et mesure dans la musique populaire Bulgare. Par Stoyan Djoudjeff. Paris: Champion. 90 fr.

In the historical introduction the author traces the external influences that have given Bulgarian folk music the richness and variety of its melodies and rhythms. Turkey has been the transforming station, as it were, taking bits and scraps here and there (from Persia, from India even) and allowing them to filter through until they became the stock in trade of Bulgarian singers and the players of *gusla*, *gajda* (bagpipes) and *kaval* (flute). Hence the protean character of this Bulgarian folk music, a quality which is visible in the plentiful illustrations given by M. Djoudjeff. A single perusal of them hardly gives the right to form any conclusion, but for what it is worth a tentative opinion may be put forward that Bulgarian folk music is interesting less for its peculiarly national idiom (which seems inconspicuous) than for the opportunity it affords for identifying the effect of a lively contest of East and West. Less purely Slav than the Russian folk music, placed geographically at a point where two cultures come into inevitable contact, Bulgarian folk music occupies a particularly perilous position as regards purity of origin and the safeguarding of it. On the other hand how remarkably fecund just that position as an output between Europe and Asia can be is shown in the detailed study M. Djoudjeff has made available of the music of his own people. It remains to felicitate him on the scholarly way in which he has presented this important piece of research.

Sc. G.

A study of Papuan music. By J. Kunst. Netherlands East Indies Committee for Scientific Research. Weltevreden. D.E.I.

Die Geschichtlichen Denkmäler der Japanischen Tonkunst. I. Hofmusik (Saibara). Nanki Musikbibliothek, Tokio.

Those who have read the two pamphlets on Eastern music by Dr. Kunst, reviewed in the last number of *MUSIC AND LETTERS*, will come to this rather larger publication prepared for something of unusual

interest on the lesser-known aspects of musicology. The interest will be found to consist chiefly in the sharp demarkation which is here shown to exist between the two types of folk music found close together, yet musically quite distinct, in New Guinea. The one (*Kauwerawet*) might be roughly described as pentatonic with chromatic alterations. The other (*Oeringoep*), not more than 150 km. distant, Dr. Kunst speaks of as 'fanfare' music, suggestive of trumpet calls and military signals generally. The idea put forward in this book that this latter form of song is older than the other and therefore a relic of a former state of human development, miraculously preserved and here emergent from under the waves of successive later states, is skilfully argued by the writer. The whole question is of great interest not only from a musical, but from an ethnological, point of view. There are one or two places where insecure knowledge of the English tongue has harmed the sense.

The first thing that strikes the reader of the first part of the publication on Japanese music is the excellent way in which it is produced both as regards type (music and words) and paper. It is in every way a noteworthy piece of work. The second fact which the reviewer comes on (with some thankfulness) is that after many pages of beautiful but wholly incomprehensible Japanese script, a German *coda* is added which, though evidently not a translation of the closed book which precedes it, does enable the ordinary reader to gather the gist of the matter. The illustrations (very clear) are also explained in German. It appears that the 'Saibara' is a type of music for voice accompanied by a small orchestra of wood-wind and strings (approximately lute and zither), but no instruments of percussion (though it appears that the solo singer employs such). The music is performed conductorless and is used up to the present day for court ceremonial.

Sc. G.

Svenska Låtar. Samlade av Nils Andersson. Stockholm: Norstedt. 12 Kr.

Folke-Musik i Gudbrandsdalen. Av Ole Mork Sandvik. Kristiana: Cammermeyer.

The collection of Swedish tunes shows folk music in the making. The book consists in short biographies of a number of dance players, all of them violinists and all (or so the photographs seem to suggest) of peasant stock. They belong mostly to the last century and come from the provinces of Bohuslän and Halland. The dance tunes here printed are evidently composed by these players and comprise examples of dance measures from most European sources. Thus there is the 'Polska,' the 'Vals,' the 'Menuett' and the 'Engelska,' none of which seem particularly Swedish in character. A more noticeable folk element is found in the example of the 'Halling' by Niklas Larsson, though if this collection of tunes may be taken as representative it would seem that the ordinary ballroom dances have the most popularity.

In the Norwegian collection of folk music before us many examples of the 'Halling' are given. These are in great variety, ranging from

the plain statement of the one called 'Iva Grindstugun' (2/4, dactylic) to the complexities of the opening six bars of the first 'Storhalling hass Jakup,' (No. 11) where the 2/4 is diversified with a succession of triplets and duplets. These all savour of folk music, though not so strongly of what we have learned to consider Norwegian as the 'Springleiker' with their triplet decorations that remind a sophisticated listener of nothing so much as a page of Grieg. At the end of the book a set of 'Newer dances' is included, similar in style and nomenclature to those noted above as coming from Sweden, and showing the same influence of bourgeois culture.

Sc. G.

Alice in Orchestra. By Ernest la Prade. New York: Doubleday Doran. \$1.

Alice, transported by the heavenly lengths of Schubert's C major, finds herself walking down the Tuba and taking an Underground to Fiddladelphia (she is an American child). There she is well received and visits Panopolis (the pipes) and Brassydale, having a touching meeting *en route* with a saxophone, who, because he is neither brass nor wood-wind, has to camp out in a tent midway between the two towns. Alice is told all about the ways and means of the inhabitants by the instruments themselves and finally attends a concert in which each instrument first takes his player out of its case before beginning. Then—she wakes up. This is a pleasant crib on Lewis Carroll written with a nice wit. Children would delight in having it read to them (though we question the use of a phrase like 'it lacks the variety and refinement of the symphony orchestra' in a book meant primarily to attract the young). At the end there are a few 'serious' chapters on the instruments, some minute biographies of great composers and some needless programmes of children's concerts. All that is a pity, for it destroys unity. However, the facts given in this appendix are useful, though directed to readers much more advanced than those who will enjoy the main part of the book.

Sc. G.

The Gramophone Handbook. By W. S. Rogers. Pitmans. 2s. 6d.

The best criticism of this book is contained in the foreword by Mr. Compton Mackenzie, who can speak with authority. This foreword commends the author for possessing 'the ingenuous confidence of the novice,' and is peppered with such phrases as 'I do not agree,' 'I cannot accept' and 'I must protest.' It ends with a paragraph beginning 'I think I can safely predict a considerable measure of popularity for this book, because even though, as I think, Mr. Rogers may sometimes make mistakes, he always makes popular mistakes.'

Mr. Mackenzie is right. The book is amiable but amateurish and this is what the public seem to like. To be of real value, on the other hand, a handbook should be professional and dogmatic.

There is much useful information in the book padded with suggestions thrown out to manufacturers which indicate a naive innocence of the fact that the gramophone has been the subject of intensive research for a great many years. For instance, it is correctly stated that in the matter of gramophone horns it is the column of

air that matters and that this should be of proper shape and length, whilst the only requirement for the containing walls is that they should be rigid and non-resonant. He then goes on to suggest a variety of materials which he thinks might be tried and talks of the effect of material on 'tone.'

There is a commendation of the pernicious practice of introducing resonating chambers in the air passage, which if they do anything at all must emphasise certain frequencies and produce an artificial booming. This is the sort of device used to give a spurious effect of deep tones in an instrument incapable of producing them legitimately.

Reference is made to the theory of 'matched impedances' and the exponential form of horn, with a half commendatory quotation of the manufacturer who declared the whole thing to be 'pure hokey.' There is only one way for the conscientious manufacturer who wants to secure perfection, and that is to use every device which is theoretically correct, even if the improvement due to it is very small. The sum total of these improvements will be astonishing.

There are useful chapters on gramophone troubles and management of the gramophone. A chapter on needles contains much that is misleading and the damning statement is made elsewhere that the author cannot tell by ear when a needle point is worn out. For the musician I think this sufficiently disposes of the work.

H. R. RIVERS MOORE.

Mozart. Ein Künstlerleben in Bildern und Dokumenten. Zusammen- gestellt und erläutert von Dr. Roland Tenschert. Johannes M. Meulenhoff Verlag: Leipzig and Amsterdam. M. 5.85.

Mozart. Sein Leben, seine Persönlichkeit. Von Max Morold. Oesterreichischer Bundesverlag: Vienna. S. 4.60.

An der Grabstätte W. A. Mozarts. Ein Beitrag zur Mozartforschung. Von Hermine Closter. Deutscher Verlag für Jugend und Volk: Vienna and Leipzig. M. 1.25.

Dr. Tenschert has produced a valuable supplement not only to his own recent life of Mozart (noticed in our July number) but even to the more elaborate biographies. Here are the actual sources, documentary or pictorial, that have been utilised by previous writers, sometimes directly but more often at secondhand, and a good deal of fresh or unfamiliar material that will be seized upon eagerly by future biographers. Moreover, it is as valuable for what it excludes as for what it contains, everything doubtfully authentic or purely anecdotic having been rejected. The book falls into two halves, the first consisting of 66 pages of plates and the second of 277 pages of documents. Both are arranged chronologically and the latter are grouped in sections corresponding to the main periods of Mozart's life, each of which is prefaced by brief introductory notes by the compiler that serve to bind the whole together. The result is not so much a mere source-book as a new type of biography, a refreshingly athletic type that has shed all its superfluous flesh. The illustrations are a feast in themselves. Among the most attractive are: a new miniature portrait of Mozart and his sister (1768?), the official receipt from the British Museum to

Leopold Mozart acknowledging the present (in 1765) of 'the musical performances of [his] ingenious son,' a page from Nannerl's diary ('London habe ich gesehen. Den Park und ein jungen Elephanten, etc.'), a funeral march, 'del Sig. Maestro Contrapunto,' which Mozart wrote for Babette Ployer's autograph album, a canon for Joseph von Jacquin to which Mozart has appended the words 'Don't never forget your true and faithfull friend,' and lastly, for there is no space to quote all the good things, a portrait of Schikaneder, looking for all the world like a brewer's drayman. Much of the literary material is equally unfamiliar: for example the extracts from the unpublished diaries of Count Zinzendorf, who was bored by Figaro but found *Così fan tutte* charming. The reviewer has noticed only two small inaccuracies. The lithograph of Constanze Mozart (p. 41) is surely not from a 'drawing' by Lange, but from an oil painting. The original is now in the University of Glasgow. And Mozart's famous dedication of six of his quartets to Haydn (p. 188) is not found in the autograph score, but is only preserved in the printed edition of the parts published by Artaria. A final word of praise should be accorded to the publishers for having produced the book so tastefully and at so reasonable a price.

Max Morold's book is rather a disappointment after his excellent study of Wagner's fight for recognition in Vienna. It is a good popular introduction to Mozart's life and work, but it contains little fresh in the way of fact or comment.

Hermine Cloetzer's little pamphlet gives for the first time in a handy form all the facts bearing upon the deplorable story of Mozart's burial. The main facts are only too familiar. But most readers will learn with surprise that in the early nineteenth century the site of Mozart's grave in the St. Marx's cemetery was still known in Viennese musical circles, although it continued to bear no distinguishing mark. It was not until 1859 that a monument was erected, and by that time it was only possible to assign an approximate site. In 1891, when the use of the St. Marx's cemetery as a burial ground was discontinued, the monument was transferred to the Central Cemetery and the old site was allowed to fall into complete neglect. The rough memorial which at present marks the spot was improvised by the cemetery keeper with his own hands. There is now a possibility of the neglected cemetery being converted into a park, and one object of the authoress's pamphlet is to secure the preservation of this humble monument. All Mozart lovers will wish success to her efforts.

C. B. O.

Verdi. By Carlo Gatti. Edizione 'Alpes,' Milano. 2 vol.

Signor Gatti has written the most comprehensive biography of Verdi that has yet appeared. These two large volumes are filled with details, there are dozens of illustrations, hundreds of notes and appendices. Whether this product of what must have been the devoted labour of many years can be reckoned wholly successful will depend on the view taken of the function of a book such as this. If the reader wants a collection of facts and meticulous accuracy and does not look for

critical judgment of the first order or elegance of presentation, he will find everything he needs in these volumes.

Signor Gatti has had access to many sources of information unavailable to his predecessors and has thus been able to throw light on several points of interest. We come away from his book feeling that we know far more about Provesi and Lavigna, Verdi's first teachers, than we ever did before; the devoted amanuensis, Muzio, comes to life in quite a new way; the reason of Verdi's famous failure to pass into the Milan Conservatoire is shown definitely, after a minute analysis of the circumstances, to have been due to his unorthodox way of playing the piano. And there are many similar instances which cannot be quoted in the space at our disposal. Signor Gatti, too, has been fortunate enough to precise some facts that have hitherto only been guessed at. Thus the important rôle played by the wife of Lucca, the publisher, in the struggle between the two rival publishing houses of Lucca and Ricordi and the setting of Wagner against Verdi attendant on it, is made clear for the first time. So, to me, is the reason given for Bülow's early dislike of the Requiem Mass. But evidently our biographer does not like Bülow; he remains almost as suspicious of his conversion as of his previous opposition.

Viewed as a literary work, Signor Gatti's book undoubtedly suffers from its virtues as a work of reference. The mass of detail almost snows the reader under. I cannot but think that the author would have achieved his object better if he had submitted his material to a longer digestive process; some things, quite unimportant, might have been eliminated altogether, and others been presented with a greater sense of proportion.

His critical sense is sometimes very good. For instance, the appraisal of 'Otello' could scarcely be better, but some of the earlier operas are dismissed far too summarily, especially when considered in conjunction with the wealth of detail that is often lavished on the circumstances of their birth. 'Macbeth' is a case in point. Unreserved praise, however, must be given to the author's treatment of young Boito's musical and æsthetic theories.

Anyone who has himself written a biography of Verdi is likely to turn first to the passages describing the rupture between the composer and Mariani, for this was an event of primary importance, not only in the life of Verdi, but in the history of music. Here, frankly, I think Signor Gatti's judgment is at fault. He has not brought forward a scrap of new evidence to prove that Teresa Stolz was Verdi's mistress, yet he seems continually almost to take it for granted. Personally, I should have thought Mariana's letter, quoted on p. 245 of the second volume, suggested, if anything, the opposite, while Verdi's own letters about the lady could scarcely be more formal.

Every lover of Verdi should be grateful to Signor Gatti for the learning and enthusiasm he has devoted to his book, but I fear that but few of them will read it. Both its merits and defects make it essentially a book for the specialist.

FRANCIS TOYE.

The Pianoforte and how to study it. By A. M. Gifford. Printed by Henderson and Spalding. 3s.

[I asked a painter who spends at the keyboard every minute he can spare from his brush, one of those, therefore, for whom the book was written, to say what he thought of it.—Ed.]

I have just read Mr. Gifford's book. Remorse is followed by hope. Now I am thirsty for water which before had been represented to me as being more difficult to get than champagne. I innocently purchased a book of —'s exercises some years ago and every page looked like flypapers that had not been changed for years. The result of trying to practise them was, as Mr. Gifford says, hardening of the muscles and nasty twitchy pains in the hands and arms. The book was so simply and clearly explanatory as to become almost startling. The first difficulty in eradicating a fault is to know and understand it, and Mr. Gifford has made the recognition possible. This is my main 'plank' in teaching drawing, and I think it applies.

Memories of Choirs and Cloisters. By A. Herbert Brewer. John Lane. 7s. 6d.

These memories of fifty years, with a few notes by his widow and by Mr. W. H. Reed, show us a cheerful and businesslike musician, who saw the best in people and the fun in things. He worked at his job, which was congenial, and made people happy round him, and he does not talk shop. Beyond some details of arrangements and of the careers of organists and singers, only two musical matters are mentioned. The first is his considered opinion that sight-reading was better fifty years ago, because choristers then sang from part books, but now from vocal scores; and the other is some correspondence about the scoring of his 'Emmaus' by Elgar. There are eight illustrations.

A. H. F. S.

Music and Literature. By James T. Lightwood. The Epworth Press. 3s. 6d.

This is not a book of æsthetics, but a collection of musical allusions in the works of a number of writers, or of the place of music in their lives, all of them English with the exceptions of Dante and Luther. There is little that is not generally familiar or easily accessible, but one or two chapters form a convenient compendium for biographical reference. The reading is, however, spoilt by a tiresome superfluity and elementary details which the reader might have been allowed to know. This may commend it for use in schools, but a number of inaccuracies need correction. For example, 'Piers Langland' is at any rate not the name of the great poet whose identity has always been uncertain; Gower's name was John, not Stephen; the singing of Chaucer's *Primers* 'entuned in her nose' is surely a reference to the practice which can be heard in any Italian church to-day, and would not surprise us, but the humour is lost when 'full swetely' is misquoted for 'full æmely'; there is no evidence that Shakespeare was not the author of 'O Mistress Mine,' as Mr. Lightwood states for the sake of a point. These, and like errors, mar the book, which otherwise contains a good deal of information on church music, old instruments, and general history.

P. B.

Musiek in opvoeding en onderwijs. Door Willem Gehrels. Groningen: J. B. Wolters. Fl. 2.25.

This enquiry into the teaching of music is significant primarily of the present state of things in Holland, though the conclusions drawn and suggestions put forward have a wider application that is of value for other nations. Having described the means at the disposal of the music teacher (including gramophone and wireless), the author attacks the question of the general musicalness of the Dutch. It is here that we meet the following sentence which has a special message for us. Combating the idea that his nation is fundamentally unmusical, the author says: 'For what mysterious reason should this one small part called The Netherlands be populated by unmusical people, while around it there dwell peoples who play a more or less leading rôle in music (with the possible exception of England)?' The author is behind the times in using the old gird about England, but we may forgive him that for his palpable honesty in the glimpse he gives us of a similar injustice, with regard to musicalness and the reverse, being suffered *in zijn eigen land*. While passionately rejecting this aspersion he still feels that all is not well with the teaching of music, and the alterations he advocates are worth studying. They include: more rather than less attention paid to the art of music in education as a means of keeping pace with the mechanising of music which threatens to swamp any really profound appreciation; a number of particular suggestions as to how to bring this about: among them the founding of a central organisation on the lines of the *Zentralinstitut für Erziehung und Unterricht* as a nodal point for the exchange of ideas. Finally, despite the sentence quoted above, the author handsomely bears witness to our strivings to teach ('... in France, England and America they are much farther ahead than we') the masses.

Sc. G.

Goethe and Beethoven. By Romain Rolland. Hamish Hamilton. 18s. net.

As with others of the later books by Romain Rolland, this one begins by irritating the reader with the florid and romantic style in which it is written and ends, having by some strange means held the attention completely, by giving a fully rounded embodiment of the problem. The subject is one of the most alluring that the historian of music could meet with and it is that fact which largely sustains the reader's attention. It is wide-flung and adventurous enough to go forward even when enveloped in the author's often clogging periods, for it deals with important activities and pursues, even if somewhat waywardly, a course of investigation into the lives and relationships of two dominant creative thinkers. Of necessity a third person intervenes, Bettina Brentano, that inspired kitten, the daughter of an early love of Goethe's, herself much favoured by him. She comes off well at the hands of Romain Rolland and the picture of her as an impassioned rebel in later years, while it does not alter our opinion of her meddlesome nature, makes it apparent that sincerity was not wholly foreign to her. The author's judgment in the case of the *Briefwechsel* dated 1835 is probably correct; the facts must be accepted with care, the portrait of Beethoven is intuitive and coloured by memories. The

document therefore is useless as an account of actual happenings, but there is no need to doubt the accuracy with which Bettina recalled certain states of her own mind. Really the *Briefwechsel* tells more about her than about Beethoven, a fact which should not be taken in too grudging a spirit for she was a remarkable young woman and a very surprising old one. She had the lion-hunter's instinct and one can hardly blame her for trying to cage two specimens so rare as Beethoven and Goethe. But like many a second-rate hostess she could bring people together but could not make them converse. Beethoven had since long honoured, almost fanatically, the poet in Goethe. Their meeting at Teplitz showed him another side, Goethe the diplomatist and courtier, with manners and methods that aroused Beethoven's scorn. Goethe was dismayed by Beethoven's rough behaviour, which seemed to him incompatible with true greatness of spirit. Both men recovered from the shock of that personal contact at Teplitz, Beethoven easily and openly, laughing the matter off (unfortunately laughing in the wrong quarter and so starting rumours that found their mark and wounded), never ceasing to honour the poet for his work, Goethe with difficulty and some ill-humour as though hardly daring to own that one so uncouth and tempestuous could be authentically a great artist. He sensed in Beethoven's music a prophetic utterance and, as M. Rolland rightly points out, he was by no means always able to look with equanimity on the turbulence of the age which was to succeed his.

Sc. G.

Richard Wagner, his life in his work. By Paul Bekker. Dent. 21s. net.

A translation of the author's 'Wagner, das Leben im Werke' which appeared in 1924. The present edition is the work of M. M. Bozman and a random comparison of a dozen pages with the original German makes it possible to recommend the translation as a safe substitute which reads, as it should (but as many of its kind do not), as real English.

Sc. G.

Cavalli et l'opéra vénitien au XVIIe siècle. Par Henry Prunières. Paris: Rieder. 20 fr.

This well-written and readable biographical study gives all the known facts of Cavalli's life and then proceeds to a discussion firstly of the music of that period, with special reference to Cavalli's master Monteverdi, secondly of the vast number of operas which Cavalli turned out. The researches undertaken by the author have caused him to place Cavalli high as a first-rate practitioner, much less high as a creative artist. This apt pupil of Monteverdi carried on the tradition of his master with less strength and still less personality of utterance. But in his music there can be found a faithful echo of the Monteverdian greatness and that gives it value in our eyes to-day. The importance of Cavalli for the musicologist is due to an accident: a large number of his works, as Parry noted, have been preserved, while of Monteverdi's operas all between 'Arianna' and 'Ulysse' have been lost. It is, therefore, to what M. Prunières prettily calls 'les belles reliures dorées de la Marciana' that we turn in order to discover

what persistence the principles of the Venetian operatic composers possessed. (With regard to the footnote on p. 25 *Grove* differentiates between Cavalli's father being 'director of the cathedral choir' and Cavalli himself being *maestro di cappella*. Possibly M. Prunières has not noticed this.)

Sc. G.

Letters of Giacomo Puccini. Edited by Giuseppe Adami. Harrap. 12s. 6d. net.

This collection of letters is prefaced by some introductory remarks contributed by the editor, a personal friend of Puccini and librettist of many of the later operas. The fourth paragraph contains questionable matter. It is making altogether too vast a claim to say 'For the music of Puccini is woven of universal humanity, of limpid simplicity, of passion, torment, youth and sorrow that cannot be spoken' though 'Never has singer given himself more generously to his public. . . . ' is true enough a description. Puccini knew two things perfectly. One was what his public wanted ('my public' is the theme of much of this book). The other was the art of the theatre, particularly that of operatic presentation. He aimed at that kind of smart efficiency which would arrest attention ('There are certain fixed laws in the theatre: to interest, to surprise, to move'). Further, he deliberately employed music to heighten the emotional appeal of a story ('Only with emotion can one achieve a triumph that endures'). It may be said that he was not alone in that, for it has been the aim of every operatic composer since Monteverdi. Puccini, however, differs from the best of them (we must place him thus high, if only because of his astonishing technical mastery) in that the emotions he enhanced were always the obvious ones. 'Gianni Schicchi' affords a tantalising glimpse of the lengths to which he might have urged his great talent. It is a masterpiece of a subtlety beside which 'Tosca,' 'Bohème,' 'Butterfly' and the rest become insignificant. But 'Gianni Schicchi' stands alone, and this set of letters, inconclusive as they are, seem to point to the reason. Puccini was bent on success of the box-office sort.

Sc. G.

Die Bewertung der Musik im System der Künste. Von Heinrich Sahlender. Jena University. (No price given.)

Immanuel Kants Musikästhetik. Von Gustav Wieninger. Berlin: Reuther and Reichard. M. 4.

The first of these pamphlets covers a large tract of the philosophy of music of which the second deals at greater length with a single section. Herr Sahlender's dissertation (for a Jena doctorate) has more interest than most of its kind for the general musical reader. It reads easily, is full of out-of-the-way information and only becomes a shade tedious when the writer loosens the rein at the finish and indulges in speculation which leads into the misty vagueness of theoretical philosophy. However, it leads through them, for the writer eventually cuts the matter short by agreeing that no valuation of music's place in any given system of the arts is possible. Too many æsthetic factors come into play directly we try to determine questions of

relative value between the arts, value itself can be divided into so many categories, each seemingly as potent as the other and each demanding a radical alteration in the component parts of the system under consideration, that the problem becomes too complex for the processes of thought, as at present constituted, to solve. It might be urged that Herr Sahlender should have spared us the recounting of a search which he knew to be bootless. But it is not so much the goal as the way that counts in exercises of this sort, and the way the writer has gone leads through a fruitful expanse. In the first part of his pamphlet the author passes in review all the important pronouncements on music made by the great philosophical writers from Plato *via* Alberti and Leonardo to Kant, from Goethe *via* Hegel and Schopenhauer to Wagner and Nietzsche. Thus he has compiled a handy short anthology which is interesting to study and of peculiar value for purposes of reference. As has been said, Herr Wieninger's pamphlet goes more profoundly into Kant's musical philosophy than was possible for Herr Sahlender to do, and provides a concise survey of that aspect of Kant's philosophy.

Sc. G.

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

The following abbreviations are used:—O. [Oxford University Press], B. [Boosey], S. [Schott], W.R. [Winthrop Rogers], E. [Elkin], St. [Stockwell], P. [Paxton], K.P. [Keith Prowse], Au. [Augener], J.W. [Joseph Williams], Ch. [Chester], Cr. [Cramer].

Songs.

Maurice Besly. *Song in loneliness. A garden is a thing of joy.* The first is less commonplace than the second. [B.]

Lauri Bowen. *Good for nowt.* [B.]

Peter Cornelius. *Ava Maria.* Found among Cornelius's papers and now published for the first time. A short meditative religious song. [S.]

Frederick Delius. *A late lark.* Pianoforte and voice score of the original for voice and orchestra, useful for purposes of study, for it gives an adequate idea of what the song will sound like in its right medium. Let no one imagine that the pianoforte can supply more than that hint. [W.R.]

Edmund Duncan-Rubbra. *A widow bird sate mourning.* A sensitive vocal line. The differences between the rhythms of the voice and the pianoforte are subtle and will need careful practice. [O.]

Hubert Brown. *All among the rushes.* Even such unsophisticated lines might be set more imaginatively. [E.]

Albert Howe. *Sister, awake!* This has promise. The cadences are rather dull and the accompaniment might be less loosely constructed. [O.]

Robin Milford. *Daybreak.* A pleasant, plain setting, very singable. The words are evidently a tamed version of 'Breake of day.' Is it known that Donne wrote them? It may be one of the spurious poems inserted into editions after that of 1633. [O.]

Jasper B. Rooper. *I loved a lass.* This is one way of setting an old poem and it is attractive because of its directness. The compass of the opening phrase is needlessly wide. Stanford or Parry will show how to avoid that sort of thing and how to set English delicately. [St.]

Wilfrid Sanderson. *Charm me asleep.* [B.]

Peter Warlock. *Bethlehem Down.* A melodious verse-setting, with a rich accompaniment varying from verse to verse. This latter is for an organ and will need careful registration, especially avoiding octave stops. [O.]

Charles Wood. *Holy Thursday.* It is a pleasure to come across a song by Charles Wood. Too few of them are sung nowadays. This is no exception to the general standard of fine workmanship which his compositions held to. [B.]

English Ayres, transcribed and edited by Peter Warlock and Philip Wilson. Six volumes excellently printed and produced. To quote the preface: the ayres . . . as their composers wrote them, unspoiled

by modernisations, additions or alterations on the one hand, or by adherence to obsolete forms of notation on the other. Than that nothing better could be wanted. The set is strongly recommended. [O.]

Schubert. *Star songs*. This is an anthology of songs by Schubert that have to do, through their words, with stars. Such a selection is welcome when it gives, as here, opportunity of meeting some unusual things. Half of these never seem to be sung, in public at least. [E.]

E. J. Moeran. *Gaol song*. A Dorset folk-song, set aptly. The words are extraordinarily amusing, the setting worthy of them. The tune is very monotonous, but then so is prison life. [B.]

Handel. *Enjoy the sweet Elysian grove*. In the edition of 'Songs for competitions' edited by Walter Ford. Rupert Erlebach's arrangement of the pianoforte accompaniment is also good. [B.]

Pianoforte.

Roy Agnew. *Whither. Exaltations*. The second has more style. Both are rather ponderous for so slight a medium. [Au.]

William Alwyn. *From Ireland*. Plain, easy arrangements of seven traditional tunes. [K.P.]

Harold Colombatti. *Agility. Flame*. The first suffers from being too square-cut, the second from making too continuous use of a figure already done to death. The opus numbers are small, so it may be that we shall see something better later. [P.]

Thomas F. Dunhill. *Sylvan scenes*. Four useful short pieces, very simple but interesting to work at. [P.]

Herbert Howells. *A sailor tune*. A well written short piece, a nice sense of humour. [Cr.]

Frederick Delius. *Air and Dance*. An arrangement of the orchestral movements. [B.]

Victor Lowe. *Nocturne in A*. Founded on a drop of a fifth to two notes repeated. After the first page this becomes monotonous. The repeated note is a cliché worth avoiding. [E.]

Billy Mayerl. *Pastorale exotique*. The composer has won fame as a player of jazz and as the inventor of a vast number of pianistic stunts. He is a master of that kind of work and in the piece before us makes use of many well-known devices, notably the range of tenths in the left hand, the block use of harmony (where the same scrap of chord-progression is pushed up or down a tone and repeated), and of course the accented off-beat. [K.P.]

Montague F. Phillips. *Three country pictures*. Good sight-reading exercises for medium-grade pupils. The second brings *Show Boat* to mind. [J.W.]

Alec Rowley. *Three invocations*. These may have been meant as orchestral pieces. The writing is able, the music reminiscent of reputable models—Elgar, Ireland. The last has most character. [Au.]

Arthur Somervell. *Four pieces*. Short and simple, for a neat-fingered pupil. The last says most. [O.]

Felix Swinstead. *O dear! what can the matter be?* An acceptable musical joke with the legend 'Played by Miss Myra Hess.'

Ernest Walker. *Four miniatures*. One of these is evidently meant

as a joke, but it is too prettily done to do other than gently tickle us. Each of these nicely designed trifles is worth stopping over. [O.]

Pianoforte duets.

York Bowen. *Four pieces.* These are out of the ordinary run of duets suitable for school use. They should be looked into by teachers. The writing is not of the kind that any pupil would be able to tackle (they are marked grade D), but a great deal of interesting work can be put in on each of the four. [O.]

Colin Macleod Campbell. *Spanish dance. Hornpipe.* The second rings truer. Both are more or less what one would expect from the titles. [P.]

Roy Thompson. *March. Hornpipe. A little pastoral piece.* See above under York Bowen. These also are to be recommended. In their small way they are real compositions, not a mere string of notes for children to play about with. [O.]

Ernest Walker. *Fantasia-Variations on a Norfolk folk-song.* The four-hand pianoforte arrangement of a MS. orchestral work. Full of interesting points of workmanship, with moments of lyrical beauty and a moving ending. Hints of what the orchestral score must be, tantalising as such. The issue of this version should (as we hope it will) persuade someone to perform the work in its right form. [O.]

Pianoforte (adaptations, etc.).

J. S. Bach. *My heart ever faithful.* A decorated and surprisingly ponderous version of the light-hearted aria. It gives someone's idea of the movement, but the strings of consecutive five-sixes and the uncontrapuntal consecutive octaves are particularly un-Bachian and Cyril Scott (whose arrangement this is) asks a good deal of those who know the aria in its original form. [E.]

Elgar. *Album.* The lighter things, 'Carissima,' 'Rosemary,' etc. [E.]

Mary Rosman and Michael Martin-Harvey. *Ten classical pieces.* The former has chosen the music, the latter set dances. The most useful part of the volume is contained in the directions for these dances, which seem clearly and concisely explained. [B.]

Orchestra.

Edward German. *Norwich Symphony.* All music has a date but not all of it dates. The phrase has come to have a depreciatory meaning by being used of art that is 'in the style of.' This symphony is not of that kind, for though it is far from being music of all eternity it has strength of character and falls less easily into a period category than the composer's stage works. There are four movements with a similarity of thematic material that suggests cyclic construction. The two outer movements (*Andante maestoso* leading to *Allegro molto*, *Andante marcato* leading to *Allegro molto*) balance each other in manner, the writing sound and straightforward, more of a scholar than of a popular composer. The slow movement is never very slow in feeling (*Andante con moto*) and as far as the printed page can hint would

come off least well. In the scherzo (*Allegro scherzando*) the German we know comes into play, making this into the most successful movement of the symphony. (Novello.)

Sc. G.

Belshazzar. By William Walton. [O.] 3s. net.

The most considerable work for chorus and orchestra written by an Englishman since the 'Sea Symphony.' The composer is the master, not the servant, of his dissonances ('the Lord's song in a strange land') and rhythms ('and all kinds of music'); at these places and many others we are lifted along by a hidden force which lies behind the actual devices employed. But it is in the contrapuntal lines that follow on the death of the king that the dramatic effect is most felt and can be least described.

A. H. F. S.

REVIEWS OF PERIODICALS

La Revue Musicale. Paris. October, 1931.

Accounts in the foreign Press of the Oxford Festival are now becoming available. Henry Prunières has a long *compte rendu* in this number. Naturally what the enlightened foreigner thinks of the works of English composers is of paramount interest for us. In this instance 'Job' comes in for censure, the 'Benedicite' for praise. Lambert's 'Music for orchestra' causes the writer to regret earlier work (the ballets 'Romeo and Juliet' and 'Pomona'). He sees here signs of 'le terrible académisme, héritage de Mendelssohn, plaie de la musique anglaise' and prophesies 'une brillante carrière officielle' for the composer. A very diverting poem 'Statuts pour l'Académie royale de musique' by an eighteenth century versifier (Barthe) is reprinted with an introductory note by Marc Pincherle. A biographical article on Pierre-Octave Ferroud introduces a young French composer little known here, said to be of much promise by knowledgeable compatriots.

November.

A further instalment of his studies of Lully is to be found in Henry Prunières' article on 'Le mariage forcé' and 'L'amour médecin' by Lully and Molière. A short article by H. F. Redlich deals with the works of Malipiero. Next comes the impressions of a French pianist (Gil Marchex) on the music of, or rather music in, Japan where the writer has lately been on tour. Information is to be gleaned from an article by Zl. Grgochevitch on modern Jugoslav music.

Revue de musicologie. Paris. August, 1931.

An end is made to A. Machabey's article 'Essai sur la méthode en musicologie.' This is of more than ordinary interest. 'Choice of subject,' 'Delimitation of subject,' 'General plan,' are some of the matters discussed and naturally 'fiches' (those magic five-by-three slips which many have gratefully borrowed from the French) play their part. A continuation is made with the Catalogue of the Royal Library at Versailles. An article by Emile Haraszti takes an unusual theme, Sigismund Bathory the sixteenth-century prince of Transylvania, and gathers a good many illuminating facts as it proceeds.

La Rassegna Musicale. Turin. September, 1931.

A review of recent books on Verdi (including Toye and Bonavia) is contributed by M. Mila. As far as we remember it is a rare occurrence

in an article of this kind to find the less good Verdi so frankly placed below the better: Otello and Falstaff being considered the truly great art of Verdi and 'la famosa triade *Rigoletto-Traviata-Trovatore*' put 'a un livello immensamente inferiore.' H. Engel's study of the history of the Madrigal confines itself to Italian and Flemish models.

De Muziek. Amsterdam. August-September, 1931.

Holland is much put out because they have no National Opera, in fact it seems they have not even a regular foreign season. Louis Couturier attacks the matter here. Karl Nef brings together the result of researches into the history of the Swiss Alphorn. Paul Sanders' report of the Oxford Festival makes interesting reading. He appears, however, to have got hold of some curious information about English music. Who told him that we call Vaughan Williams the British Richard Strauss? And to say that in 'Benedicite' there is music of 'a popular, Salvation Army character' shows clearly that Heer Sanders has not yet fathomed the real nature of that type of music, at least as practised in England. The remainder of the report is less amusing but sounder as to actualities.

Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft. Leipzig. September, 1931.

Dénes v. Bathra has a lengthy article on the historical aspect of the sixteenth century chanson, with special reference to Nicolas Gombert and Benedictus Appenzeller. This is an important piece of research into the Josquin period. From Adolf Koczirz comes an article, also to do with sixteenth century musicians, dealing with music at the court of Maximilian I of Austria. Librarians are directed to Constantin Schneider's article on the cataloguing of musical literature.

Anbruch. Vienna. May, 1931.

In March Bela Bartók had his fiftieth birthday. According to report little was done in Budapest to celebrate this event adequately. The writer of an article here, Alexander Jemnitz, sets out to rectify what is felt to be a regrettable omission and to do honour to genius which seemingly has won greater recognition abroad than at home. Paul Stefan discusses the departure of Strauss from Vienna Opera.

Der Auftakt. Prague. July (Heft 6-7), 1931.

Prof. Dent's article on English Music is evidently meant as a preparation for the foreign visitor to the Oxford Festival. In four

small pages it gives a clear survey of the salient points in the period from Parry to the present day and explains the Englishman's attitude to music to-day and how that differs from the German's. Two points, after reading this: It would be useful if foreigners would help us to an understanding of their musical mentality in the way Prof. Dent has helped them to understand ours. It would be equally useful to have this article in English for the help it would give us in understanding our own musical past, the effects of which are now operative.

Zeitschrift für Musik. Regensburg. September, 1931.

Continuing its practice lately instituted of publishing short biographical sketches of the lesser known modern German composers, this number opens with an article on August von Othegraven by Heinrich Lemacher. Hans Joachim Moser's notice of Bayreuth contains some useful facts and criticisms. An article by Paul Bülow has as its subject the poet Wilhelm Raabe, whose work was greatly esteemed by Wagner and Brahms.

Disques. Philadelphia. September, October, November, 1931.

Three numbers of a contemporary new to us. The articles are kept on the short side and on the whole are well founded. That on 'The British Renaissance' (Laurence Powell, September) gives the facts of the case fairly, though we think there is some exaggeration both of the extent and the harmfulness of the Handelian occupation during the nineteenth century. Certainly at the time under discussion (Elgar's early years in Worcester) the Mendelssohn tradition had more force. The rest of the article is sympathetic and shows understanding of music here. The list of recordings is most useful. It is strange that so much modern English music is available abroad and not here. An important feature of this periodical is the description of new records in each number.

The Musical Quarterly. New York. October, 1931.

'Music and Drama' by Ildebrando Pizzetti has the authority of a big name. More than that, it discusses the subject wisely and starts one thinking for oneself. An article on 'East Indian Rhythm' by Winthrop Sargeant and Sarat Lahiri does much to help a European to an understanding of the subject. The problems are clearly stated. The printing of a 'Gath' for the vina in staff notation is valuable. An article by Franz Montgomery brings the musical instruments mentioned in Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales' under survey.

The Music Lover. London. Vol. I, No. I. October 17, 1931.

We welcome the appearance of this new weekly. The auguries are very favourable. Edwin Evans, the editor, has always striven hard to get modern music a hearing and has more knowledge of the actual material thereof than any other writer here. The assistant editor is Christian Darnton, whom we already know as a composer; what the teaching profession has lost, music criticism has gained. In 'Our Aims' the editor lays down the scope of the paper, a democratic one, including discussion of music of various classes, not excluding the popular.

GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

Orchestral

COLUMBIA.—Berlioz: *The royal hunt and storm* (Hallé Orchestra, conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty). A reliable record of Berlioz's finest piece of picture music, excellently played under a known Berlioz enthusiast.

Debussy: *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (Straram Orchestra, conducted by Walther Straram). Not enough character about the interpretation, but the playing is inoffensive and deals faithfully with the score. The whole thing is not bad, but ought to sound more subtle and varied.

Mozart: *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (British Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Bruno Walter). Nothing wrong here with the manner of performance. String tone a shade uncertain in places, otherwise all is in order. It is a most satisfactory record.

Ethel Smyth: *Overture to 'The Wreckers'* (British Symphony Orchestra, conducted by the composer). After hearing last year's Covent Garden performance of this work many will be glad to get nearer to it. The record before us has the authority of the composer's direction. It remains, therefore, only to say that the actual recording is good as regards tone.

Stravinsky: *Symphony of psalms* (Straram Orchestra, Vlassoff Choir, conducted by the composer). An opportunity to become acquainted with a work which, the reader doubtless guesses, hardly welcomes the hearer. The record has presumably been passed for publication by the composer, and so what sounds confused in the Double Fugue, for instance, may only be confusing to an unaccustomed ear (after five times through the record, however). Students (and this record is mainly for them) will be well advised to have a vocal score by them for use with the record.

H.M.V.—Borodin: *In the steppes of Central Asia* (L.S.O., conducted by Albert Coates). Arbitrary changes of *tempi*, not to be found in any score known to the reviewer, mar this performance.

Dvorak: *Symphony No. 5, 'Aus der neuen Welt'* (Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Leopold Stokowski). A very satisfactory record, of the kind that sets a high standard to which one could wish all records would attain. The reproduction is the best in quality and the truest that has come our way so far. The playing is splendid, the interpretation is sane.

*Elgar: *Two Interludes from 'Falstaff'* (New Symphony Orchestra, conducted by the composer). None too subtly played (according to the miniature score), these must serve until the complete work, which is promised, appears.

*Haydn: *Symphony No. 6 in G major (Paukenschlag)* (Berlin State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Leo Blech). A library piece for which

nothing but delighted praise. The slightly mannered interpretation is yet exactly right. The playing is always perfectly clear and precise.

*Liadoff: *Eight Russian fairy tales* (L.S.O., conducted by Albert Coates). The only blemish is in the strings, which are breathy and often loose in attack. The music itself is delicious even if the listener has no vision of 'Children's Tales,' that early gem of Diaghilev, to increase pleasure in these perfect miniatures.

Mozart: *Pianoforte concerto in A major* (K.V. 488) (Arthur Rubinstein, the L.S.O., conducted by John Barbirolli). A sensitive solo performance and an alert, discreet accompaniment make this a conspicuously good record, worth using carefully.

*Prokofiev: 'Classical' *symphony* (Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Serge Koussevitsky). The music is pastiche, not wholly devoid of attraction though the ideas are jejune enough and the harmonic basis of each movement lamentably poverty-stricken. The performance is wonderfully neat.

*Ravel: *La Valse* (as above). As regards playing, the best record we have heard of this orchestra for some time. It is remarkably true to the letter, as well as to the spirit, of the work, with one exception: the strings are too loud (noticeable with this orchestra in other records), playing *forte* when marked *mezzo forte* continuously. Also at figure [20] there is an arbitrary change of *tempo*. Otherwise the record is worth possessing.

*Ravel: 'Daphnis et Chloé,' second suite (as above). A previous recording managed the divisions of the four sides more skilfully. Here the playing is the better of the two, reproducing more and finer shades of colour. This also is worth having.

Saint-Saëns: *Le carnaval des animaux* (Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Leopold Stokowski). What can one say about this perennial but that what one likes is just as likeable and what one dislikes just as boring? At least one can still admire the ingenuity of it all. From this excellent set of records a perfect performance can be heard. Even the pianofortes sound like the right animal.

*Sibelius: *The swan of Tuonela, from the 'Lemminkäinen' suite* (as above). In all the large array of records to be noticed in this issue no music reproduced on them seems to have the individuality and distinction of this short movement. Yet there is nothing 'in' it, only a series of meandering cantilena passages for wood-wind against a curtain of tremolando strings (with one weird effect which the listener can find for himself at the end of the record). But the picture is clear, the telling of the tale very moving, with all the spirit of the Kalevala therein. Undoubtedly this is a record to have and to keep. The playing of it seems in perfect order.

*Richard Strauss: *Ein Heldenleben* (New York Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Willem Mengelberg). As might have been expected with this conductor, the performance is thought out to the last tittle in matters of balance and *tempo*. The result is splendid for the clarity of the playing and the unity of the thought behind it. It is easy to recommend this record.

*Stravinsky: *Chinese march from 'Le chant du rossignol'* (L.S.O., conducted by Albert Coates). Diverting music, often agree-

able, in the composer's earlier style. The playing is capable and adequate, on the whole a faithful reproduction.

Tschaikovsky: *Francesca da Rimini* (L.S.O., conducted by Albert Coates). A useful addition to Tschaikovsky records. The playing is energetic and straightforward, the reproduction good.

POLYDOR.—Brahms: *Second symphony* (Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Max Fiedler). This is rather noisy, though much of the solo work is sensitively done. The latter is treated with great leisure and the balance suffers in consequence. So definite and deliberate are some of these 'readings' (such an one may be found in the first movement, where not only is the marking *poco à poco stringendo* completely ignored, but the opposite effect, a ponderous broadening, inserted) that one is inclined to ask: Did not Brahms know his own mind? The orchestra plays well all through and as a piece of recording this is admirable. The flamboyant interpretation will be found to be to the taste of those who prefer the twopence-coloured variety of Brahms. The rest will probably find the pomposity (for instance, at the return of the second subject of the first movement) almost amusing.

César Franck: *Symphony* (Lamoureux Orchestra, conducted by Albert Wolff). The heavy atmosphere of this is partly due to the thickness of the orchestration (for instance, the doubling of wood-wind in the second movement which is hardly ever likely to sound well), partly to the lack of brightness in the string tone. The work is otherwise well played and interpreted sanely.

Mussorgsky: *Pictures from an exhibition* (Berlin State Opera Orchestra, conducted by Alois Melichar). The orchestral version is the remarkable one by Ravel. The conductor's name is new to us. He gives a reliable reading. Playing excellent, always highly expert, never out of focus. As a *bonne bouche* Glinka's *Kamarinskaya* is thrown in lightly.

Chamber Music

COLUMBIA.—Two transcriptions (Lener Quartet). Of course the playing is exquisite. A hint of the saccharine will be noticed. Often the relaxation which artists permit themselves when they take to performing 'transcriptions' brings this excess of sweetness with it. One is tempted to ask: Are there no great works of chamber music still unrecorded by the Lener Quartet? The pieces on this record are: Gluck (Brahms's arrangement of a *Garotte*), Tschaikovsky (*Barcarolle*).

H.M.V.—*Beethoven: *String quartet, op. 59, No. 1* (Budapest Quartet). Good strong playing. Like many otherwise excellent quartets, these players are too insistent in accompaniment; the repeated quavers here are inescapable, not a background but a predominant figure. Fortunately the bones of this work are worth hearing rattle. In the first movement there is too much noise; the leader seems to have no *mezzo forte*. (What authority is there for the *fortissimo* climax of the coda being altered to *subito piano*?) The slow movement is a little sentimental, the final thoroughly good.

*Beethoven: *String quartet, op. 130* (as above). The general style of interpretation is as in the last quartet noticed here—admirably

rhythmic, a well-ordered ensemble, some harshness, always strength of utterance. There is nothing to offend in this reading. The student of late Beethoven will find the facts put concisely before him.

*Tchaikovsky: *String quartet in F major* (as above). In many ways this sort of music is better suited than the two previous works by the methods employed by the Budapest players. Its facile volubility is an easier matter to interpret satisfactorily and a fairly generalised expressiveness can be applied with good chance of success. The Budapest players are neither facile nor voluble, but behind the firm control of their Beethoven playing there seems to be an emotionalism which is more native to them and which here gets natural expression.

Solo Performances

COLUMBIA.—Beethoven: *Pianoforte sonata in D minor, op. 31, No. 2* (Gieseeking). Whoever is sensible enough to get this record will have one of the finest examples of interpretation of Beethoven's pianoforte music there is. It would be possible to draw attention to innumerable points either of splendid playing or penetrating insight. The movements flow inevitably, each bar occasioned by the preceding one and occasioning the next. What is great playing but the producing of that sensation?

Chopin: *Waltz in C sharp minor* (violin solo, Bronislaw Huberman). Exquisite playing. The music sounds well enough on the fiddle. On the reverse Elgar's *La capricieuse*, equally well played and as emotionally.

Dvorak: *Humoreske* ('cello solo, Gaspar Cassado). It was probably not the composer's fault that this piece has become hackneyed. It is our misfortune, though if we are to hear it at all then let it be as Cassado plays it here. It makes us listen, which is one way of finding that behind the music's reputation lurks something real.

Hummel: *Rondo favori* (pianoforte solo, Ania Dorfmann). Very good virtuoso record. The piece has a more subtle humorousness than given here.

Saint-Saëns: *Le cygne* (oboe solo, Léon Goossens). But that one could hardly guess the genus of the instrument this is a remarkable reproduction. The phrasing is wonderfully perfect and the whole effect soothing to a degree.

H.M.V.—Beethoven: *Violoncello sonata in A major, op. 69* (Pablo Casals and Otto Schulhof). There is great breadth and dignity in the playing as well as an admirable ensemble. More than that there is nothing to say unless it be to advise the hesitant to do so no longer. Need will hardly be to wish for a finer performance.

Vocal

COLUMBIA.—Two folk songs: *A bold young farmer, As I was going to Banbury* (Annette Blackwell). The first, arranged by Vaughan Williams, is particularly lovely. The singing is attractive, light without being mincing. *My Johnny was a shoemaker* (traditional) is also included.

H.M.V.—Mussorgsky: *Varlaam's song from 'Boris Godunov'* (C. E. Kaidanoff). This will be a bass singer new to many. The

voice is of the right Russian bass quality, not very resonant in the upper register. In the 'Song of the flea,' on the reverse side, the singing is extremely good.

Richard Strauss: '*Herr Kavalier*,' from *Rosenkavalier* (Kipnis and Ruziczka). If you know the opera from performances this will be found pleasantly evocative. If not, then there is the waltz to carry thoughts in some other direction. Kipnis singing '*Das schöne Fest, Johannestag*' (Meistersinger), on the reverse, is splendid. Orchestral accompaniment.

Note.—Readers are strongly advised to study the newly-issued Connoisseur's Catalogue of H.M.V. Records from that source reviewed here are marked with an asterisk. It is hoped to review a further selection in the next issue.

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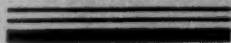
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